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Magdalena Micińska

At the Crossroads 1865-1918

A History of the Polish Intelligentsia – Part 3

PETER LANG EDITION

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The three-part work provides a first synthetic account of the history of the Polish intelligentsia from the days of its formation to World War I. The third part deals with the period between 1863 and 1918. It is the period of numerical growth of the intelligentsia, growth of its self-consciousness and at the same time of growing struggles and rivalries of various political streams. The study concludes with the moment when Poland regained the independence that had been lost in 1795. The work combines social and intellectual history, tracing both the formation of the intelligentsia as a social stratum and the forms of engagement of the intelligentsia in the public discourse. Thus, it offers a broad view of the group's transformations which immensely influenced the course of the Polish history.

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Introduction: The Black Gown

Schowaj, matko, suknie moje,	Keep away from me, mother,
Perły, wieńce z róż:	My frocks, rose wreaths, pearls;
Jasne szaty, świetne stroje –	Lucid robes now fit some other:
To nie dla mnie już!	No more frolics, swirls!
Niegdyś jam stroje, róże lubiła,	Once, about roses, apparels I raved,
Gdy nam nadziei wytrysknął zdrój;	As a spring of our hope gushed;
Lecz gdy do grobu Polska zstąpiła,	But now, that Poland descends to her grave,
Jeden mi tylko przystoi strój:	That's my costume, and all things lush:
Czarna sukienka!	**The black, black gown!**

Mourning gowns, pall ribbons, or jewellery featuring apparent patriotic-eschatological symbolism was made obligatory by the populace of Warsaw in 1861, the time of demonstrations preceding the January Insurrection. Clearly enough, this gloomy atmosphere intensified as the uprising fell. Characteristically, the crushing defeat experience was initially described in a romanticist style, well-known and acknowledged at the time, but sounding naive today.

The little poem quoted above, *Czarna sukienka* ['The Black Gown'] by Konstanty Gaszyński (d. 1866), refers to Adam Mickiewicz's ballads written a few dozen years earlier. In the face of the horrible disaster, metaphors of this kind and equally simple rhymes were in use among almost all the romanticist epigones. However, this trivial ditty perfectly renders the mood that overwhelmed Poles – at least, the educated individuals, completely formed in terms of national awareness, deeply concerned about the present and future condition of the entire nation, and that is, representatives of the intelligentsia – in the mid-1860s. That the insurrection was defeated was not the end of the story. Its conclusion was a disgraceful calamity embracing those who summoned others to fight, using pompous language, many of them joining the battle as well, along with those who, in the name of the purposes of reason and moderation, turned their backs on those struggling, distancing themselves from the juvenile recklessness, the lack of political responsibility, the maleficent myopia, or the internal feuds inside the insurgent party. The January Insurrection ended in a wave of repressive measures being applied to Polish people in the Russian Partition (initially, also in the Austrian Partition), which outright menaced the nation's physical existence. Part of this outcome was a piercing conviction, shared by the vast majority of the

educated Polish elites, that armed struggle was ultimately discredited as a means of regaining lost independence; that Poles had not only to go on mourning the fallen and the executed but, in parallel, search for new ways to defend their national substance. Soon after, a new, clear and crude language, adequate to the fall's depth and to the aspirations for the future, was elaborated on.

The Polish intelligentsia, across the partitioned lands, attired the *black gown* from Gaszyński's simple poem – symbolically, in most cases, but sometimes also in the most literal way. Among the Galician democrats, who cultivated the memory of the heroes of 1863-4, it was the fashionable mode to manifest national bereavement. At the house, for instance, of the Lwów journalist and politician Tadeusz Romanowicz (1843-1904), "it was so plaintive, to the extent that awe was striking". The host "wore Polish-style clothes, a black *żupan* [a sort of caftan]"; his sister, Zofia Romanowiczówna (1842-1935), a writer, "gave the impression of being a vestal who had decided, sworn, never to laugh out loud, never to be consoled"; his mother "was seated on a sofa, like a goddess of mourning, in a black dress […]. A silver Eagle [badge] served her as a brooch; the black hair, which all the family had, did not spoil the harmony of that dreary tone".[1]

Dismal mourning of the glory of yore or, the opposite of it, condemnation of the insurgents' pestilent imprudence became predominant, over several dozen years, in the Polish debates on the January uprising, and in the Polish intelligentsia's way of thinking about the last armed spurt. Several dozen years, with new generations having matured, were necessary for words of criticism and tearful lamentations to be replaced by the heroic legend of the January Insurrection, proclaimed in dozens and hundreds of poems in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; in stories, tales and novels authored by scribblers with a sense of patriotic mission as well as by the leading exponents of the Polish literary scene. What is more, half a century after the defeat, not only was public homage to the lost and suffering ones called for, but also a pride owing to the insurgents' achievements, their audacity, devotion, fortitude, tactical skills, valour and, in particular, their outstanding abilities in becoming self-organised under the extremely hard conditions of an inimical partitioned environment.

These abilities were, one might say, incarnated by the National Government, its courier services, the stamp featuring the Polish Eagle, and its nameless order – the factors that integrated a considerable share of society for a dozen-or-so months during 1863-4. On the verge of the 20th century, the January

1 Kazimierz Chłędowski, *Pamiętniki* ['Memoirs'], vol. 1 *Galicja 1843-1880* ['Galicia, 1843-80']. Wrocław 1951, p. 110-111.

Insurrection became not only a repository for heroic and martyrdom attitudes, commemorated in annual Galician celebrations; but a treasury for participants of gymnasium (secondary-school) conspiratorial dealings in the Russian and Prussian Partitions. Half a century after the last insurrection was defeated, and two years before the world conflict broke out, young Poles could see in it, quoting Józef Piłsudski's statement from 1912, "a forge of the war thought that is to continue enduring in Poland"[2].

Over the fifty years following 1864, not only the judgement on the January uprising evolved: the period was decisive to the crystallisation of attitudes among the Polish intelligentsia. For those people, the disastrous outcome of January 1863 was the largest challenge in their class' history; in what ways they got to grips with it, how hard-won successes were recorded to their credit, and how ignominious defeats were incurred, will be discussed further in Chapter 4 of this volume. The late 1860s and early 1870s became the period when Polish intellectuals' views and opinions for the first time diverged so dramatically: responses to the catastrophe, attempts at understanding and rationalising it, setting completely new objectives and paths for the entire nation, drove educated Poles to completely different itineraries and did not at all foster a sensitive understanding for dissimilar choices.

The distance kept by the wrathful young Positivists, who in the post-January Warsaw declared war against the eulogists who claimed a Christ-related mission for the Polish nation, taken over from the Romanticists, and hackneyed; or, the distance demonstrated by the no-less-irate, and almost equally young, *Stańczyk* faction exponents, was enormous, in Krakow, they denied that the local democrats had a decent level of patriotism, and its expression was not limited to acrimonious commentaries in the press but also in the indiscriminate epithets they would flounce against one another.

And still, it nonetheless seems that the 1870s or 1880s was probably the last period, particularly in the Russian Partition, when representatives of the Polish intelligentsia proved capable of coming to an agreement, in the name of a common position of the Poles against the partitioner. Catholic publicists could for many years display hatred toward Aleksander Świętochowski, a liberal man; for his part, Świętochowski could provoke them by stigmatising parochial models of religiosity, sexuality, and family; Darwinists could jeer at creationists who, in

2 Józef Piłsudski, *Zarys historii militarnej powstania styczniowego* ['An outline of the military history of the January Uprising'], [1912], Lecture 8; quoted after: J. Piłsudski, *Pisma zbiorowe* ['Collected works'], vol. 3, Warszawa 1937, p. 129.

turn, could directly equate Darwinism to a cult of Satan – all this still seems to have been an internal struggle between Poles, carried out without the participation of the partitioning authorities, without referring to the common enemy. In those realities, a man like Świętochowski could be received in a conservative salon by his ideological opponents, although before then, a wall of disgust separated him from them. In 1880, about a dozen years after the leading Positivist manifestos were published, he was invited to pay a visit to the house of Aleksander and Jadwiga Kraushar, but this was not all: the hosts "were ordering a regular storm for three days in order to take the man by it for their soirée".[3] Aleksander Świętochowski no more impersonated at that time the incomprehensible and odious principles, but was a confederate in the struggle against the superior adversary. In the late 19th century, the everyday reality in Warsaw, willingly remarked by memoirists, was mutual contact (albeit very much wariness-imbued) and the exchange of views (with one's own opinion remaining guarded) between zealous Catholics and non-denominational people; between socialists and moderate advocates of conciliation; between the wealthiest and best-related, by marriage connections, and the intelligentsia elite and pen-pushers living from hand to mouth; and, amidst members of the intelligentsia of varied ethnic backgrounds.

This same period, the century's close, disturbed, however, this relative balance, maintained with great exertion. From the mid-1880s, the young Polish intelligentsia drew upon the intellectual ferment which was engulfing Western Europe as well as Russia at that time, eventually causing a looseness in the nineteenth-century, positivistic, rational understanding of the universe. The new modernist epoch did not perhaps annul all the achievements and beliefs of the 'age of science', now coming to its end, but it certainly caused a deep break in them. The decadent, melancholic end of the century, drowning in the fumes of absinthe, brought along the seeds of qualitatively new phenomena, *modern* ones (*moderne*, in French), determining, as it would occur, the public and private life of the inhabitants of Europe, and of Poland, for at least the whole of the following century. Modernity implied a redefinition of the subject and object of politics, and a new style of its pursuance; the birth and development of mass-scale movements (socialism, nationalism, peasant parties); new methods of playing the political game and winning over supporters to one's platform; and, moreover, the conviction – perhaps not really new but articulated so boldly for the first time – that the

3 Eliza Orzeszkowa, *Listy zebrane* ['Collected letters'], ed. by Edmund Jankowski, vol. 6, Wrocław 1967, p. 87.

right argument in the game rests with a single, and only (that is, ours), side and party. Modern states, and nations too – self-aware though without a state organisation, like the Poles – were codifying at that time new formulas of patriotism and their own identity, forming ethnically homogeneous communities and excluding and 'placing beyond the pale' the elements they deemed foreign. The late 19th and early 20th century was also marked by an attempted redefinition of relations between outstanding individuals and the nameless masses; the visionary artist and the philistine public; woman and man; wife and husband; parents and children; the old and the young; the wealthy and the destitute; those who enjoyed common respect with contentment and those rejected, in neglect and disregard.

In Polish lands, most of these phenomena took a course more laborious and painful than in Western Europe, as Poles, apart from in Austrian Galicia, had no modern, centrally controlled instruments available with which to incarnate the assumptions of a modern Polish government – that is: a national army, school, cultural and scientific institutions, or even legal political parties. At the same time, the turn of the twentieth century was the time when the public life of the Polish people began to be formed, and subsequently dominated, by the generations on which the 'black gown' of mourning after the January Insurrection defeat was never superimposed. Generations, represented for the first time ever, on such a scale, by males and females alike, which challenged the usefulness, patriotism, and even the simple honesty of their fathers, rejected the common sense coerced by the sense of frailty, ignominiously moderate purposes and even more temperate methods of achieving them. Symbolic to these was, for instance, *Głos*, a magazine issued from 1886 in Warsaw: an emphatic utterance of that young generation, their common cry of dissension toward the detestable reality and, in parallel, a metaphorical intersection at which the Polish intelligentsia eventually turned in two completely different directions, to the left and to the right, going further and further away from each other at the crossroads ever since. The increasing conflict would come to an apogee in the Revolution of 1905-7 – in the fierce struggles over declarations, journalistic texts, bloody sacrifices, and clashes between socialist and nationalist party armed gangs.

More than fifty years of the history of the Polish intelligentsia between the fall of the January Insurrection and Poland's regained independence in 1918, abounded with sudden turnings of the plot and astonishing paradoxes. There was a horrific disaster and no less horrid repressions at the period's dawn; nonetheless, the following decades proved, for the intelligentsia, to be a period of quite unprecedented revival: this group set for itself probably the highest aspirations in its history, enjoying a hitherto-unknown prestige. The First World War (1914-8) and the reinstatement of independence for Poland, with a remarkable

contribution from the local intelligentsia's thoughts, effort, and blood, conclude the period under discussion.

Between those limited dates, the Polish educated elites changed radically. If the latter half of the 19th century admitted common mourning, shared meditation on common needs, common "quiet confidential conversations between fellow countrymen"[4], the turn of the century finally dispelled these good-natured illusions. The socialists and the nationalists reproached each other for having betrayed the immemorial ideals, for yielding to foreign influence, for lusting for power, interestedness, and ideological strangeness. In 1918, an unusual tangle of internal endeavours and external occurrences will enable the construction of what was then called The Second Republic. Would the builders, Polish intellectuals, be capable of building a new country out of the rubble – or would they rather transfer to the regained homeland the phobias and resentments bred over the years of national bondage?

4 Ludwik Krzywicki, Introduction, in: Ignacy Radliński, *Mój żywot* ['My life'], Łuck 1938, p. IV.

Chapter 1: The situation of the Polish intelligentsia after the January Insurrection

1. Professional development opportunities

The late 1860s and early 1870s were marked with a deep and long-lasting change in the Polish intelligentsia's self-consciousness and ideological profile, and impressed their stamp on most issues relating to the intelligentsia's everyday existence and prospects for professional development. The intelligentsia had to (re)define themselves, and continue developing in the bosom of three thoroughly different state organisms which themselves were subject at that time to grave transformations and reforms.

After the January Insurrection was defeated, the Russian Partition was subject to brutal repression affecting the whole of society, not just its intellectual elite. The physical losses in the insurgent fights and summary executions were multiplied by the subsequent deportations into the depths of Russia, of Siberia, which embraced some 40,000 insurrectionists and their families, thus eliminating them for a number of years, often forever, from the country's life. Detentions and deportations were accompanied by the confiscation of property, upsetting ownership conditions (particularly in rural areas) or, at times, irrecoverably changing the country's map, since a frequent practice in Białystok Land, Byelorussia and Lithuania was the displacement of entire nobility-owned small farms, under the pretext that their dwellers had participated in the uprising. A majority among the deportees were the movement's most active and most conscious participants, dedicated to the idea of an expeditious restoration of an independent Poland. The Circum-Baikal [also called Baikal] Uprising of 1866 closed this stage of Polish history. Initiated by a few hundred Polish exiles working on the construction of the Circum-Baikal road, a beaten track, in Siberia, after a series of a few days' skirmishes and a dozen-or-so days of wandering across the Siberian wilderness, the insurgents were captured again; their leaders were shot by firing squads, and most of the others had their sentences exacerbated.

Soon after the January uprising's defeat, the liquidation of the autonomy of Kingdom of Poland (or, Congress Kingdom) was initiated: the Russians abolished the central administration's institutions, assimilating them to the structures existing in the Russian Empire; also, the Polish language was gradually eliminated from public life and the school system. In 1869, the Main School was

closed, an Imperial University of Warsaw being opened in lieu of it, with Russian as the language of instruction; in parallel, Russian was introduced in the gymnasia (high schools) and, after 1871, in the people's schools. The 'Kingdom of Poland' was renamed 'Vistula Country' (or, 'Vistula Land'; Russian, *Privislinsky Krai*). Churches other than Orthodox ones were also subject to repressive measures. As far as the Catholic Church was concerned, the abolishment of dioceses, the persecution of bishops, the confiscation of ecclesial properties, and the cassation of monasteries was the daily agenda. 1875 saw the abolishment of the Uniate Church in the Kingdom, which in Podlachia and Chełm Land triggered the bloody suppression of resistance from the Greek-Catholic people forcibly proselytised into Orthodoxy.

In the Lost (also called 'Stolen') Lands, the annexed territory so called by Poles (*Ziemie Zabrane*; termed '*Zapadnyi* [Western] *Krai*' by the Russians), no structural changes occurred, as they already formed an integral part of the Russian state; but post-Insurrection repressions affected language, in turn: Polish was thereafter completely ousted from all spheres of public life. Even more consistent than in the Kingdom was the policy aimed locally against Catholicism, which was identified with Polishness: resulting from dissolutions of parishes and cloisters, the Latin monastic life in the eastern lands of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (referred to as *Kresy* – the Eastern Borderlands) came to an almost complete standstill.

At that same time, the Austrian Partition witnessed a process no less seminal, but marked with a converse vector. Resulting from the reforms of the entire Habsburg Monarchy in the late 1860s/early 1870s, Galicia too introduced an autonomic state administration, and political authority came, to a prevalent degree, into Polish hands.

The situation in the Prussian Partition was determined by the emergence, in 1871, of the German Empire under Hohenzollern rule, whose Constitution transformed the Reich into a federal state (a union country), with the King of Prussia as the German Emperor. The Polish lands, however, were still governed by the Prussian Constitution of 1848.

The diverse legal status and developmental opportunities in these few sectors entailed a different situation for the professional intelligentsia. Particularly strong differences could be observed in the access of educated Poles to jobs with the state-apparatus bodies of Russia, Austro-Hungary and Prussia (thereafter, Germany). In the Russian Partition, such opportunities were gradually restricted owing to the aforesaid institutional changes, the elimination of the Polish language, and a tendency to replace Polish officials with Russian counterparts. However, the civil service in Congress Poland had never been de-Polonised

completely. Generally, Poles held lower-rank offices and their promotion was neglected. For instance, Warsaw courts before the outbreak of World War One had only nine judges of Polish nationality employed (this being 4.2% of the total headcount), whereas the Court of Appeals featured not a single Pole, among a little less than 200 judges. The situation was different at lower levels of the administration though, as well as in the local-government institutions of the municipalities (particularly, small towns) and communes that still held a (rather limited) scope of authority, enjoying, by consequence, less prestige as a potential path of clerical career.

Career opportunities with public educational and learned institutes were equally low for Poles. The closure of Warsaw's Main School signified a loss of many chairs that provided the basic means of living for a considerable group of scholars and scientists; it also grossly impeded the education of their subsequent generations. Only a very small group of Polish professors were offered an opportunity to continue their work within the university, which was now Russian. With time, and the natural departure of the older generation of scholars and scientists, the number of chairs held by Polish professors was continually diminishing. Those retiring were replaced by Russians; there were only a few cases where Poles assumed independent posts, for to obtain them one had to provide a certificate of political loyalty, use the influence of high-placed people, and accept the principles imposed by the system. The latter was loathed by a number of scholars, especially exponents of the humanities, for whom Polish was the workspace. This attitude is well illustrated by the case of Piotr Chmielowski. This illustrious critic and literary historian refused, in 1882, to accept his appointment as a docent with the Warsaw University, having learned that, contrary to what had been decided beforehand, the history of Polish literature was to be lectured in Russian and not in Polish.

As a result, the university saw a dramatically quick shrinking of Polish staff: as of 1870, there were thirty-six Poles on the senior academic staff, twenty years later – fourteen, and in 1910 – only one. The situation was similar with the Institute of Farming and Forestry in Puławy, which was Russified. The chances for gaining a post with state gymnasia were not better: firstly, Russian was obligatory as the language of instruction; secondly, such schools were few, existing mostly in *guberniya* towns and in the larger urban centres. Given the situation, some scholars, scientists and pedagogues in Congress Poland found a basis of subsistence mainly in private educational institutions, editorial teams of scientific magazines and social institutions extending patronage to the sciences; these will be covered at more length later on. Contestation of the binding regime meant, in these areas as well, many lost opportunities for legal employment. An extreme, but nowise

unique, example was the experience of Stanisław Mieczyński, a scholar of Polish and a teacher of Polish grammar at Jadwiga Sikorska's boarding school in Warsaw. For lecturing in Polish, rather than in the obligatory Russian (a Russian inspector eavesdropped one of his lessons through the classroom's door), he lost the right to teach in legally functioning institutions, and was afterwards sent on a three-year exile into the depths of Russia – for laying a bunch of flowers during a 1891 celebration, declared illegal, for the one-hundredth anniversary of the Third-of-May Constitution.

In the Stolen Lands, almost all the possibilities for a public career were closed to Poles, at least until 1905. Their access to public posts was immensely hindered; the only distinctive domains against this background were courts with juries and magistrates' courts, where landed gentry representatives mainly served. In the Stolen Lands area, there were almost no Polish institutions able to absorb Polish science and education workers. Career opportunities for the intelligentsia were further undercut by the removal of the Polish language from public life, since – in contrast to the Kingdom – all the Polish publishing houses, newspaper editorial offices and theatres were closed down when the lands were incorporated into the Empire; what is more, a strict prohibition of Polish books and pamphlets was in force. Kiev, an important centre of Polish life in the Eastern Borderlands for several decades before the Great War, played a special part, given the context: this university city, along with – to a lesser extent – Żytomierz (Zhytomyr), with its continually operating Catholic theological seminary, attracted and educated members of the Polish youth, preparing the ground for the intellectual ferment of the early twentieth century.

In the Prussian Partition, the access to jobs with state institutions was considerably hindered for Poles and, moreover, largely depended on the policy pursued by the authorities (in the *Kulturkampf* period, especially, Polish teachers and officials were removed from their posts). There was no Polish institution of higher education in this region. The influx of Polish teachers to secondary and elementary schools, limited as it was, almost subsided after 1888 – the date they were forced to pledge that they would teach and educate their youth in the spirit of German ideals, particularly, in loyalty to the German fatherland and its Emperor. Poles had, in turn, a representation in the Landtag throughout this period; however, in the competition for a parliamentary career, holders of the professions typical to the intelligentsia would usually lose to the landed gentry and Catholic clergy.

Galicia, enjoying its autonomy, and the Cieszyn/Teschen Silesia area were places of peculiarity, given the context. Public institutions were progressively Polonised there with time; promotion opportunities in the domains of politics,

military affairs, local government, science, or education and the school system lied open for Poles. Polish politicians, officials and clerks could count on a career with one of the Galician authorities, with the provincial Diet of the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria at the head, as well as with the Habsburg Monarchy's state-wide institutions. In the autonomy period, the Austrian Prime Minister's office was held by two Polish politicians, Alfred Potocki and Kazimierz Badeni; Agenor Gołuchowski, Leon Biliński, and Julian Dunajewski ran various ministries of the Austrian Government. While the highest-ranked posts were mainly reserved for politicians derived from the aristocratic, best-connected and most influential families of Galicia, Polish officials and clerks in the offices and ministries, military-men with the officer corps and foreign-service diplomats were recruited from various, generally petty-nobility and intelligentsia, milieus. The career of a civil servant was, in Galicia itself, the most desirable and most willingly chosen way of life for most of the young educated people, as it ensured a stable, though not quite high, income.

With time, the daydream of a "collar of gold, with emptiness in the pocket"[5] – and the Galician bureaucracy, taken more broadly – were subject to increasingly overt criticism by comers from other Polish lands and commentators from within Galicia. The hierarchical system of Galician offices, their overwhelmingly feudal spirit, their fondness of ranks and formal dress-codes, their tributary attitude toward superiors, instilled into employees (for instance, a clerk was not supposed to criticise his boss, under pain of dismissal), were meant to kill any individualism, restrict any enterprise, and absorb the employee's best years without ensuring them an equitable return, in exchange. "For forty long and bloodletting years, the Galician is tormented, destroyed, growing barren, and languishing – to finally, in his year forty-and-one, get his retirement pension": so wrote *Tydzień*, a Lwów magazine, as the twentieth century opened. Moreover, as Franciszek Bujak, one of the leading intellectuals, remarked in his *Galicya*, strict observance of "the clerical duty", combined with no high aspirations displayed by the officials, made for a disadvantaging influence, producing an "anti-social sentiment in the minds of the Galician intelligentsia". In parallel, however, clerical work done in a Galician town, or in Vienna, could help build a financial background, based whereon members of the intelligentsia could pursue their off-professional interests and passions. Kazimierz Chłędowski was a perfect example of an official/intellectual of this kind. A writer, he authored works on Italian Renaissance

5 Paweł Ciompa, *Drożyzna w Galicji i nędza urzędnicza* ['High prices in Galicia and clerical poverty'], Lwów 1913, p. 83.

culture, which enjoyed popularity; in terms of his professional life, he was employed with the governorship office in Lwów and with the Ministry for Galician Affairs in Vienna. However, Chłędowski wrote his most important works after his resignation and retirement. It was with genuine relief that he accepted the end of his more than thirty years' service. "I have most completely come to terms with a life without an office", he recollected; "instead of going to the office at nine, I would sit down and write, at home. Then, some business to attend in the town, a short walk, a luncheon, then on, some reading […], [receiving or paying] visits after four, often a dinner party of the soirée, or, a theatre – and so did the day pass over, without longing for a clerical life."[6]

Galicia's teaching personnel, remaining under the control of the Home School Council, established in 1867, was for the most part formed of exponents of Polish intellectualism and representatives of the Polish intelligentsia. The autonomy period saw a considerable increase both in the number and the standards of state gymnasia. The professorial staff stood out, compared to the other Polish lands, in terms of professional competencies, displaying a European standard. Secondary schools in the big cities, especially in Lwów and in Krakow, were frequently scientific institutions of importance, and their teachers, due to multiple bonds and scholarly interests, remained in close contact with the university staff.

Krakow and Lwów were also the only hubs countrywide which could boast Polish universities. The latter half of the 19th century saw their significant development, as well as their increasing autonomy and Polonisation. Polish was officially the exclusive language used at the Jagiellonian University from 1870 onwards; in the following year, lectures at the Emperor Francis University of Lwów (much better known by its interwar-period name John Casimir University) started to be delivered in two languages: Polish and Ukrainian. A regulation concerning the organisation of the academic system, enacted in 1873, confirmed the extensive power of the University Senates and Rectors; this was followed by an increase in the number of departments, students and professors. The universities' traditions were becoming codified at that time as well, which manifested itself in a standardisation – or, in fact, a new design – of the rectors' and deans' gala costumes. The custom of solemn anniversary celebrations was launched: one of the most pompous and expanded ceremonies was the funeral of the remains of King Casimir the Great, which took place on 8th July 1869 (and became the first opportunity for all the university professors to wear their gowns); another such occasion was the five hundred year anniversary of the Krakow Academy, in 1900.

6 Kazimierz Chłędowski, *Pamiętniki*, vol. 2, p. 292.

The Lwów University's Senate introduced the habit of wearing gowns and caps from 1887.

Both learned institutes acted as scientific centres whose influence extended over all the three Partitions, where they, reciprocally, recruited students for enrolment and headhunted professors. In the late 19th and early 20th century, nearly a third of all Jagiellonian University professors (and, to a still larger extent, its Philosophical Department) came from the Kingdom of Poland, the Stolen Lands and the Prussian Partition. The composition of the professorial cadre in Lwów was similar. Consequently, the Galician universities not only provided education to young people and offered chairs to professors from all of Poland, but moreover, contributed to a sustained coherence and unity of the Polish learned milieus transcending partition divisions. Other higher schools in the Austrian Partition played the same part, to a lesser extent; these included: the Lwów University of Technology (established in 1894, based on the Technological Academy opened there fifty years earlier), the Farming School in Dublany, and the Academy of Fine Arts established in 1900 in Krakow. Also, the Academy of Learning, inaugurated in 1873 on the basis of the Krakow Learned Society, gained countrywide reach as well. Apart from the encouragement of research, it set itself the aim of representing Polish science and scholarship abroad; hence, holding conventions in Galicia, organising research expeditions abroad, and maintaining its scientific stations in Rome and Paris were all part of its responsibilities.

Apart from at Galician universities, Polish students attended higher schools in almost all of Europe, especially at Russian institutions (in Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Dorpat, Kazan, and elsewhere) and the centres in Germany (especially in Berlin, and in Wrocław/Breslau; since the early 20th c., also in Leipzig and Munich); moreover, in Switzerland, France, and the United Kingdom. Clusters of Polish students, of either sex, at foreign universities not infrequently formed the subsidiaries for independence-oriented and social organisations operating outside of the country. The Polish academic colony of the Swiss universities (in Zurich and Geneva, primarily) deserves a special mention in this context, as in the late 19th century and early years of the 20th century, it formed an important reservoir for socialism, then under development in the émigré communities.

It has to be considered, too, that the latter half of the nineteenth century saw an awakening of the Polish element in areas that had never formed part of the Commonwealth (First Republic), or where competition was particularly strong from German culture – that is, in Upper Silesia, Pomerania, and Varmia. With the late 1860s, Silesia and, to a lesser extent, the other regions too, witnessed a veritable flood of Polish press titles, of various sorts and standards. Between 1868 and the beginning of the following century, a few centres in Upper Silesia and Opole

Silesia published around twenty periodicals targeted at Polish-language readers; these included, to name the major ones: *Katolik* ['The Catholic'] (inaugurated in 1868 in Chełmno, then moved in the following year to Królewska-Huta, which is Chorzów today); the family magazine *Przyjaciel Rodzinny*; *Kalendarz Katolicki* ['The Catholic Calendar'], through to information journals such as *Nowiny Raciborskie*, *Gazeta Opolska*, *Kurier Górnośląski* and *Górnoślązak*. Almost all of these were targeted at common folk, placing a strong emphasis on their Catholic quality and character, in opposition to the German language and German issues, imbued in the Protestant context. A similar profile was represented by the Polish Pomeranian and Varmian press: *Przyjaciel Ludu*, issued in Chełmno; *Przyjaciel*, in Toruń, *Pielgrzym*, in Pelplin, *Warmiak*, in Olsztyn, plus the local newspapers of Gdańsk, Toruń, Grudziądz, or Olsztyn (*Gazeta Gdańska*, *Gazeta Toruńska*, *Gazeta Grudziądzka*, *Gazeta Olsztyńska*, respectively). A majority of those titles succeeded thanks to the individual stubbornness and the great expectations of the outstanding proponents of Polishness in the western outskirts of the spiritual homeland of the Poles, who happened to be illustrious exponents of the intelligentsia. Among them were men-of-letters, teachers, booksellers and publishers, politicians and, in the first place, national and social activists who understood the enormous importance of the Polish-language press in arousing and supporting Polishness – that is, the Polish language, culture, customs, and way of life – in the nationally heterogeneous areas. Contrary to the activists in the Eastern Borderlands area, they had an opportunity to put their hopes into practice; the editorial offices and boards of magazines in the western frontier area became in the late 19th century a really important source of upkeep for the scarce local Polish intelligentsia.

A considerable group of educated Poles went abroad after 1864, reinforcing the ranks of the earlier-date émigré communities. Right after the insurrection was defeated, Polish emigrants in the West of Europe remained in a chaotic state; the discords and clashes between the new (post-January) and the old emigration community determined the conditions of these communities' activities for several hot post-insurrection years. The 'new ones' endeavoured in the foreign lands, not quite successfully overall, to extend the life of the National Government agencies. Among those initiatives, the magazine *Ojczyzna*, edited by Agaton Giller and published from 1864-5 in Leipzig and Bendlikon, and the Polish Émigré Community Union [*Zjednoczenie Emigracji Polskiej*], established in 1866, deserve a mention.

On the opposite side of the emigration's political scene, the conservative Hôtel Lambert camp persisted, as it had been doing for several decades, monopolising the assets of the Polish diaspora dwelling by the Seine. Reporting to it was the

local Historical-Literary Society; the Polish emigration schools operated under its auspices. But the controversies held between Polish émigrés in France did not matter much to that country. The Commune of Paris, 1870; the revolutionary movement targeted against the constitutional, albeit ignominiously losing, Second Empire authorities, compromised Polish national aspirations in the French people's perception for many decades, heavily hindering the activities of Polish associations or societies in France. Yet, the sacrifice of Polish Communards – including those most outstanding: Walery Wróblewski, Ignacy Chmieleński and, especially, Jarosław Dąbrowski, who was killed on the barricades as the commander-in-chief of the Commune's armed forces – willy-nilly made the Polish independence movement bound up with a worldwide need for great change.

The return of emigrants from West-European countries to Galicia, the only partitioned province to have opened its borders to the insurrection veterans, became a phenomenon of increasing importance to the Polish émigré communities from the 1870s onwards. Krakow, Lwów and other lesser towns, offered shelter to a number of exiles who after the fall of the January Insurrection took flight to the West, with a similar number of deportees now released from Siberia. Among the latter, Catholic priests were particularly numerous: the Russian authorities refused them, in most cases, the right to resettle in the Kingdom, or, especially, in the Stolen Lands, even if they had been through decades of exile. This being the case, going to Galicia appeared as the only chance to break free from the depths of Russia: in Galicia, the deported clergymen effortlessly obtained permits for permanent residence and could perform priestly ministrations. Among the veterans settling down in Galicia were many outstanding individuals who in their new abode proved capable of efficiently delivering their plans for life and took on important roles in local public life: just to name the journalists Agaton Giller and Stefan Buszczyński; Józef Popowski, deputy with the Council of State in Vienna and the Galician Diet; or, Bernard Goldman, a Lwów deputy and longstanding activist with the Society of Participants of the 1863 Insurrection. The return of émigrés or exiles was thus one more way for Poles from the other Partitions to replenish the community of autonomous Galicia, contributing to its political, social and intellectual potential.

2. The development of capitalism and opportunities for the intelligentsia

The tendency to restrain the access of Polish people to state posts and offices, which was apparent everywhere outside of Galicia, was not counterbalanced by the increased opportunities opened for the Polish intelligentsia by developing

industries and private banking. The second half of 19th century witnessed an unprecedented period of industrialisation and development of capitalist enterprises and initiatives; this development was, however, constrained to some enclaves, never embracing the whole country, or even a majority of the Polish lands. This state of affairs occurred due to a number of factors. Firstly, the industrialisation of a poor and backward country was carried out, to a considerable extent, with the use of foreign capital which, along with indispensable funding, brought to Poland foreign professionals, far better educated and, from their employers' standpoint, much more trustworthy than the local technical intelligentsia. Secondly, the conditions of social development typical to Polish lands, and to those aspiring to be Polish, caused that the demand for experts dramatically diverged from the supply, in most cases. In the most industrialised areas, such as the Łódź hub (the city and its satellite towns), or in Prussian Silesia, no Polish intelligentsia existed at all – or, if present, they were very thin on the ground and, usually, not really interested in strictly industrial activities. On the other hand, in the regions where the intelligentsia was strong and significant in numbers – such as in Galicia – the underdeveloped industry could not provide them with an absorptive labour market. "Here in Galicia", a co-organiser of a technology specialists' convention in Krakow wrote, "whilst enjoying a number of national freedoms and access to all the offices, with the industry only emerging, hindered remarkably by the flourish of industry in the western crown countries, excessively are we craving for the state and autonomous offices of all types, since the only-emerging industry is still in need of not-too-many completed technologists."[7]

Warsaw was the only centre where demand could, at least partly, find sufficient supply, but the opportunities offered by this city for professional careers with private enterprises could not compensate for the lack of access to state posts. Around the year 1870, transportation, industries, commerce and private bankers offered employment to a mere fifteen per cent of the intelligentsia. This share did not fundamentally change several decades later, as the banks and private enterprises were incapable of absorbing the thousands of intellectuals who could no longer find jobs and subsistence for themselves with state agencies that either did not exist or were now closed to Poles. In the first years of the 20th century, the

7 Roman Ingarden, opening speech delivered at 6th Convention of Polish Technologists, Krakow, 1912; quoted after: Jarosław Cabaj, *„Walczyć nauką za sprawę Ojczyzny". Zjazdy ponadzaborowe polskich środowisk narodowych i zawodowych jako czynnik integracji narodowej (1869-1914)* ['"Struggling through science for the Homeland's cause". Supra-Partition conventions of Polish national and professional milieus as a national integration factor, 1869-1914'], Siedlce 2007, p. 156.

eastern outskirts of what had once been the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was the only Polish territory where a significant share of the professional intelligentsia put their talents and efforts at the disposal of the manufacturing sphere – i.e. industries, including the construction industry, transport, and the like. For Polish engineers, architects, technologists and technicians, as well as commercial dealers and bank clerks in the Stolen Lands, working for a capitalist enterprise – no matter whether the Russian state capital, partnership or private equities were prevalent there – was, so to put it, the only opportunity to gain a meal ticket within the Russian Empire's limits. The contributions made by Polish professionals to the development of civilisation in the Empire gained understanding and respect among their compatriots (and foreigners too, at times); still, voices of condemnation, and accusations of giving away one's talents to a foreign service, were no less frequent.

3. Liberal professions

The so-far-described differences between the three Partitions concerned the so-called liberal professions – physicians, barristers, publishers, journalists, and artists – to a lesser extent. The degree of liberalisation in the partitioners' policy with respect to Polish language and culture quite obviously affected the possibility of performing the professions whose precondition of existence and development was the necessity of using one's mother tongue. This explains, as already mentioned, the almost complete freeze on Polish public life in the Stolen Lands, after the January Insurrection was crushed. It also implied that in the Kingdom of Poland, law graduates joined the ranks of the private bar, rather than becoming public prosecutors or judges. The major drivers which shaped the numerical force and determined the financial status of liberal, or self-employed, professionals across the Partitions were the rules of the labour market and the necessity to gain the clientele.

Nearly all the commentators on the Polish social life of the later half and the last years of the 19th century observed the phenomenon of a 'surplus' among the intelligentsia, relative to a society's actual needs; this most acutely affected representatives of the liberal professions whose survival depended on competition and initiative in finding clients. Artists, writers, publishers, art gallery owners, or even scholars and scientists, deprived of support from public institutions, consumed much of their time and energy by searching for patrons or sponsors who would be willing to finance their projects. In Polish society, with its limited means and relatively not-too-strongly aroused aesthetical and spiritual demands, such searching was not frequently successful. Private patronage

was most developed in Galicia and Congress Poland, especially in Warsaw; the situation was the worst in the Prussian Partition where a lack of such patronage resulted in a slight number of artists of Polish nationality.

As years passed, the situation for doctors deteriorated: in the early years of the second half, they enjoyed high social prestige, owing to their relatively low number – and, to the individual merits of the profession's most illustrious exponents, with Tytus Chałubiński or Ignacy Baranowski at the forefront. After 1880, a noticeable increase in the number of physicians implied a rapid deterioration of their financial situation. Dramatic claims that opening a private practice and making a living from it was impossible could be heard from all Polish lands. A lack of available jobs – so perceived, at least, by the medics on the verge of their professional careers – was not counterbalanced by the endemically developing industry, which opened for the most entrepreneurial among them the way to full-time employment as a factory physician. At the beginning of 20th century, *Głos Lekarski*, a Galician industry periodical, straight away advised young people against undertaking medical studies. In Galicia, yet another obstacle in the way of gaining a lucrative private practice was the strong competition from clinics and professors, forming – as described by one local physician – a closed 'ring' monopolising the clientele and not admitting young colleagues to get in touch with it.

> School-leaving certificate candidates! Do not you enrol with the Medical Department, for the many years of your tedious and costly studies, you will not even find a piece of dry bread, but instead, you are sure to encounter poverty, typhoid fever, hospital treatment, or strychnine! This warning is being given to you by the thousands of disillusioned doctors who have wasted their abilities and powers.
> *Głos Lekarski*, 1903, no. 6.

As a result, in 1903, some 40% ofregistered doctors remained unemployed in the Austrian Partition, with just above 12% holding private jobs. In the subsequent years, joblessness among doctors intensified, thus leading to increased competition and making universities look for drastic methods to solve the problem. As nationalist tendencies were simultaneously growing, the search degenerated at times into attempts at taking away the opportunities of becoming professionally educated from other national groups than their 'own' one. A resolution enacted by Vienna University's medical faculty before the outbreak of World War One, excluding from the student community Austrian subjects from the crown countries that had their own universities, with operational medical departments, and that is: Bohemia, Styria, Tyrol as well as Galicia, may serve as an extreme example.

A similar situation occurred in the Kingdom of Poland, particularly in its provincial areas. Resulting from the growing numbers of qualified physicians, on

the one hand, and the society's still-low hygienic, health and sanitary expectations and civilisation-oriented needs, on the other, a peculiar paradox appeared in the late 19th/early 20th century: almost all observers consistently diagnosed the disastrous condition of society's health, particularly in the peasant community; yet, a *praxis aurea* for doctors did not come into being. The rural populace preferred to use the services of amateur surgeons (*felczer*s), midwives and witch-doctors, cheaper and more trustworthy to them; in large cities, the most thriving practices were only reserved for a narrow group of well-known professors who often formed a financial, and also an intellectual, elite of their own town and of the entire country. Even a relatively low increase in the numbers of doctors, and of representatives of the young generation in other intelligentsia-related jobs, could not find an outlet in satisfying the social needs which, although apparently so obvious, remained unrecognised in the mentality of uneducated and indigent people. Throughout the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the Polish intelligentsia struggled with the issue of "the surplus of educated people in a country of illiterates"[8]. The 'overproduction' of an intelligentsia was characteristic not only of Poland: the phenomenon had an all-European extent and affected, in particular, societies within the central and eastern part of the Continent, displaying a similar stage of civilisational development.

4. New sources of the intelligentsia

The surplus, or overproduction, of the intelligentsia became an extremely burning issue in the face of three phenomena of social life that were gathering strength in the course of the period being considered, that is: the pauperisation of the nobility/gentry; the emancipation of women; and, the emancipation of Jews. All these three groups enriched the ranks of the professional intelligentsia, a fact which to a large extent exacerbated the conflicts outlined above; the influx of people from these groups faced the intelligentsia, as a community, with a necessity of solving novel questions, both of a pecuniary and an intellectual nature.

8 Jerzy Jedlicki, *Kwestia nadprodukcji inteligencji w Królestwie Polskim po powstaniu styczniowym* ['The problem of a surplus in the intelligentsia in the Kingdom of Poland after the January Insurrection'], in: *Inteligencja polska pod zaborami. Studia* ['Polish intelligentsia in the partitioned country. Studies'], Warszawa 1978, p. 222. Cf. idem, *Jakiej cywilizacji Polacy potrzebują. Studia z dziejów idei i wyobraźni XIX wieku* ['The civilisation the Poles need. Studies in the history of nineteenth-century ideas and imagination'], 2nd ed., Warszawa 2002.

The enfranchisement reforms rolling through Polish lands during the nineteenth century changed social relations to a considerable extent, by limiting the nobility's economic foundations of existence, and, indirectly, by contributing to the awakening of new, other than farming-related, aspirations of people of a noble background. The reforms were completed last in the Russian Partition, where the fundamental social transformations overlapped with the repression following the January Insurrection, which deprived of property a considerable group of the landowning gentry, making these people look for a job in the towns. Formerly, the historiography maintained an exaggerated view whereby the Polish intelligentsia's provenance, or ancestry, was the nobility; leaving aside, for a while, the controversy over the extent to which the Polish intelligentsia was dependent upon the landed gentry (this thread will be taken up as the story unfolds), especially, any unreal attempts at showing this dependence in terms of factual numbers, it needs to be highlighted that the nobility stratum was the background for a considerable part of the intelligentsia in the Russian Partition, and, likewise, in Galicia and in the Prussian Partition. More importantly, the nobility that was growing impoverished joined the intelligentsia's ranks long after the enfranchisement reforms were ended and the post-January repressions ceased. Meanwhile, resulting from the afore-described limitations, the intelligentsia was incapable of accepting, absorbing, and maintaining these new arrivals. Educated, noble sons enlarged, in most cases, groups of the most indigent intelligentsia, or, the downright, 'intelligent proletariat', becoming actors in the increasingly hard-fought rivalry for state or private clerical jobs – or, for clients.

The phenomenon was noticed, from the early 1870s, by the young Positivist publicists, albeit it had existed and was commented on before then. The closing of career paths in public institutions, a weak industry and banking sector, and a feeble labour market for liberal professionals caused that education, particularly humanities-oriented, ceased to ensure a safe job or livelihood. As a result, tertiary graduates had to undertake pursuits in no way conforming to their actual competencies and expectations. "A lawyer becomes a private instructor; a philologist joins a commercial bank; a mathematician teaches Latin at a boarding-school; a naturalist does the writing at a notary-public's", Aleksander Świętochowski observed, in the *Przegląd Tygodniowy* weekly, in 1872. "The abilities, tempers, destinies all blended – a genuine Babel Tower, built of human brains […]. Of such minds, wasted in idleness or muffled in the conditions contrary to them, is a plenty – almost seven-tenths of the overall mass of spiritual forces".

The reason for such 'wastage of minds' was usually identified by young Positivists in the permanence of the Polish nobility ethos, the traditional model of education for children (i.e. boys), and the school education system. The perennial,

'post-nobility' aversion toward craftsmanship and trade was the reason why those of the landed-gentry sons who could not be supported with the use of the family property, wanted to build their future based on humanistic studies, replenishing, in consequence, the group of redundant intelligentsia, condemned to poverty and the hectic quest for activity or trade of any sort. Similar negligence of an expert educational background was manifested by intelligentsia families, whose reproduction occurred on a 'rubberstamp' basis, facing an inevitably deteriorating financial standard and prestige.

A consistent critic of the traditional education and upbringing model, Bolesław Prus repeatedly condemned, in his weekly chronicles published by the Warsaw press, the incomparability of young intellectuals' education to the challenges of the time. This traditionally impractical dimension of home upbringing and education implied wastage of energy which could have otherwise been used to satisfy society's real demands, preventing young intellectuals from efficiently serving the nation, and remarkably restricting their chance to achieve an expected standard of life.

> Will you believe it: our so-called enlightened classes, for instance, display abhorrence toward crafts and commerce! There is almost no father-of-the-family who would not be willing to ensure *higher* positions to his sons. Those good fellows would desire to see in their offspring nothing else than collegial counsellors, factory directors, or, in a worst-case scenario, physicians and barristers […]. The *self-respecting* families, i.e. those acknowledging the preponderance of polished floors over washed, only assign their degenerates for craftsmanship.
> Bolesław Prus, *Kronika tygodniowa* ['The weekly chronicle'], Kurier Warszawski, 1879, no. 195.

In the face of a complete Russification of schooling in the Russian Partition, the postulates voiced by Warsaw publicists could not turn into a coherent programme of educational reform, without a chance to be implemented. Galicia was the only province where a serious discussion on the teaching curriculum could, and did, take place. A local polemic on how education ought to be shaped in secondary schools, particularly in 'classics' (that is, Latin) gymnasia, was a splinter of the debate that in the second half of the 19th century trundled through almost the whole of Europe. The debate's fundamental framework was the opposition between a curriculum typical of the 'classics' school and the postulates of 'real' education, the latter seeming more congruent with nineteenth-century modernity. The debate was initiated in Galicia by pedagogues, in the first place; university and lower-grade students joined with time, mostly in the first years of the 20th century.

The Society of Higher-School Teachers, established in 1884, was the major community body calling for a reform of the tertiary school system. Outstanding

pedagogues associated with this organisation voiced an in-depth critique of the curricula binding with the classics gymnasia, perceiving them as diverting from the realities of the late 19th/early 20th century. Franciszek Bujak traced the roots of the humanistic-literary teaching profile down, outright, to noble and undemocratic Polish culture, characterised, as it were, by no sense for economic life, a lack of assiduity, and the excessively plethoric role of poetry as the basis of the Polish mentality and spirit. A classics gymnasium graduate and university student – that is, a Polish intellectual in Galicia, Bujak's contemporary – would, to his mind, have got by in Pericles's Athens, "but he appears unprepared for comprehending a number of even the most fundamental symptoms of our contemporary life". In order to change this state of affairs, those criticising the classics gymnasia postulated that the agenda for natural subjects should be expanded and, in particular, modern languages should be taught on a compulsory basis, at the expense of Latin and Greek. Furthermore, a more attentive approach was to be taken toward students' health and motor skills, through physical education. This criticism essentially boiled down to the question of whether a state as poor and backward as Galicia could at that time afford to disburse a significant share of education-allocated funds on teaching dead languages, and almost nothing else. Defenders of the classical education, such as Paweł Popiel, a leading conservative politician, emphasised, in response, that the central objective behind the gymnasium education was nowise carefulness not to overburden the students with undue mental work but, instead, to train and educate the country's intellectual elite and instil into them a spiritual refinement which a natural-sciences-oriented school would not be able to offer.

During the entire period of Galician autonomy, no thorough changes took place in the gymnasium-level education system, although, along with classics gymnasia, a certain number of 'real' schools, with a more modern curriculum, came into being. Still, the curriculum debate and the pressure exerted by the external world's needs led to an essential alteration in the proportions with regards to higher education. The general university-level education proved less and less useful in view of the ability to find one's way around the labour market, and thus extorted the emergence of universities or colleges providing students with practical and specialist knowledge, and the opening of new university departments. An Agricultural College was established within the Jagiellonian University in 1890; a separate Medical Department was set up in 1894 at the Lwów University. In the first place, however, dedicated institutions focusing on technological and natural sciences were established: the Lwów University of Technology, the Academy of Veterinary Medicine (1871) and the High School of Forests (opened in 1874, based on earlier courses) in Lwów; in parallel, the Agricultural Academy

in Dublany, near Lwów, enjoyed a development. A similar trend appeared in the Kingdom of Poland: no tertiary technological school opened in its territory before the war's outbreak, but there were some ersatz: the Wawelberg and Rotwand Engineering School (established 1895), distinctive by its high standard; the Russian Polytechnic Institute (1898); and, subsequently (since 1907), the Polytechnic Courses held under the umbrella of the Society for Educational Courses. All these eventually contributed to the Warsaw University of Technology [*Politechnika Warszawska*], established in 1915. A role of importance in the preparation of human resources for commercial and banking activities was played by Leopold Kronenberg's Commercial School for male students, established in 1875. No such institution appeared, for a change, in the Prussian Partition: the Higher School of Agriculture in Żabikowo (1870-5), private, ephemeral, and of a much lower scientific and educational standard, was the only comparable entity.

Apart from the nobility becoming declassed, women formed the other group of importance which in the late 19th century joined the intelligentsia ranks. As time went on, women increasingly numerously endeavoured to gain a university standard of education and, subsequently, earn a job commensurate with this education. The first big wave of women in search of mind-engaging activities entered the labour market soon after the January Insurrection, primarily in the Russian Partition. For most of them, undertaking gainful work was decisive for their own and their families' survival: this appeared as a necessity, after the loss of fathers and husbands who had fallen victim to the Russian repressions after the defeat, and from the loss of properties and estates, resulting from confiscation or bankruptcy. These women had usually a rather poor, fragmentary education, and so the chance of them finding employment was not too great. It was they, who, basically, turned into governesses, nursemaids, private tutors and instructors; also, elementary and secondary school teachers (usually, with private boarding schools) and so-called classroom ladies, whose task was to look after female students in dormitories. An increasingly numerous group of women penetrated the field of journalism, initially finding employment with press intended for women or for youth and folk, or loosely contributing to magazines of a general character, with no chance of being employed on an equal footing with male journalists. The first woman journalist who won for herself a permanent position with a magazine's editorial board was Felicja (Fella) Kaftalowa, who from 1877 edited a popular gossip column in the Warsaw daily *Kurier Poranny*.

Women's raised aspirations with respect to education enforced the appearance, in the later years of the 19th century, of state female gymnasia: Krakow saw the first such school set up in 1896; four gymnasia for female students operated in Warsaw at the beginning of the following century. However, girls were

primarily educated at private boarding schools, established and run by female teachers of the most varied professional qualifications; an extremely fast development of networks of such schools was the case, in particular, in the Russian Partition after 1905. Female teaching staff were also employed with such institutions; gymnasium jobs were a rare opportunity. In the school year 1913-4, women amounted to a mere circa 3% of the professors' cast in Galician gymnasia (although they formed almost half of the teaching staff overall!); that they received lower salaries than their male counterparts was a rule.

Women began thereafter endeavouring to gain the right to be educated at tertiary schools. What was described as a Polish women's struggle for admittance to universities took a parallel course to a similar struggle taking place almost all over Europe, and was fully won only after World War One.[9] The earliest date women were given the right of admittance to universities was 1863 – in France; females could enter the university in Zurich from 1864 onwards; then came Geneva, in 1872, and the other Swiss universities too. In 1874, a Medical School of Women opened in London; in 1879, female students were admitted to London University; in 1881, to Cambridge and in 1894, to Oxford (with limitations). Tertiary schools were opened for female students in Austro-Hungary in 1896, and women obtained the right to get their foreign diplomas validated with them. 1897 saw the appearance of the first such female institution in Russia – the Medical Institute in Petersburg. At last, German universities started accepting female students from 1908.

The first Polish institution to offer women a store of knowledge on a level above the gymnasium was Higher Courses for Women, organised in 1868-70 in Krakow by Adrian Baraniecki, a welfare worker and bibliophile. These Courses consisted of the sections: historical, literary, natural, artistic, and economic, and commercial (the latter two were soon closed, due to a lack of interest), and the initiative enjoyed, especially from the 1890s onwards, quite a popularity among women from the entire Polish territory. Between 1891 and 1924, the year the Courses were closed, some 4,500 recorded students used the opportunity, 54% of which came from Galicia, 23% from the Kingdom and 18% from the Lithuanian-Ruthenian lands and from further inside Russia, and 4% from the Prussian Partition.

A series of secret university-level lectures held in Warsaw since the early 1880s, integrated into the so-called 'Flying University' from 1885-6 by Jadwiga

9 Cf. Jan Hulewicz, *Walka kobiet polskich o dostęp na uniwersytety* ['Polish women struggle to be admitted to universities'], Warszawa 1936.

Dawidowa, née Szczawińska, and attained a comparable reach. This phenomenon will be covered at some length in Chapter 5; as for now, let us mention that these courses, attended prevalently by women and young girls, gained an unprecedented dimension among all the secret and open educational initiatives, gathering thousands of interested people, whilst in parallel, winning the leading Polish scholars and scientists of various fields for co-operation. A few hundred people would register for these courses year by year – one such annual period had as many as 1,100 attendees; this added up to, at least, 100 lectured hours a week. At the same time, the legal Imperial University of Warsaw had some 1,500 students in attendance. With the revolution of 1905-7 over, the courses in question became legalised, and were now renamed as the Society for Educational Courses [*Towarzystwo Kursów Naukowych*] and were formally structured into the natural, humanistic, mathematical, technological, and agricultural section. The Humanities Section alone saw more than 9,500 attendees joining it, 82% of which were women; this made the institution no longer inferior to its akin university departments, in terms of character and scale.

The Jagiellonian University was the first Polish higher school (and the only one, until World War One) that admitted women to its student community. The first three female 'extraordinary' students, so-called 'visiting attendants' [*hospitantka*s], enrolled with the Pharmacy Department in the academic year of 1894-5; all three came from the Russian Partition. In the year of 1896-7, the Krakow academy had sixteen female students; in the following year, women were allowed to enter the medical and the philosophical departments – initially as extraordinary students or visiting attendants. Those first female students were aged nineteen to fifty-two, and were varied in their descent, personal experience, and educational record, and, possibly, in their plans for the future. Prevailing among them were women aged thirty-plus – and that is, born after the January Insurrection, those who had matured in the 1880s and 1890s, a period of particular intellectual ferment that overwhelmed the Polish intelligentsia. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the number of female Jagiellonian University students systematically grew, having made a quarter of the students' community by 1914.

Seen in the context of Galicia and the Kingdom, the Poznań Province lagged much behind, with not a single woman with a completed university-level education until 1907. This situation was slightly changed owing to admittance of females to German tertiary schools from the following year onwards. However, there were only sixteen Polish students among the females attending the universities within the German territory as of 1910.

Having gained their education, women, on an equal footing to men, set about competing for government jobs, or struggling for a position for themselves in

the liberal profession market. Their 'collective vicissitudes' are exemplified by the portraits of four exponents of diverse professions, born within a dozen-or-so years of each other and taking diverse courses in their lives. The following story features Teresa Ciszkiewiczowa (b. 1848), a medical doctor, and her three almost-coevals: Jadwiga Ostromęcka (b. 1861), a teacher; Zofia Daszyńska-Golińska (b. 1866), a scholar; and, Oktawia Rodkiewiczowa-Żeromska (b. 1866), an administrator with the medical institution in Nałęczów (not far from Lublin), and the wife of the writer Stefan Żeromski.

Teresa Ciszkiewiczowa (born to a Samogitian landed-gentry family) was an eminent exponent of the first generation of women with a university education. Having completed her gymnasium course, she went to Bern, Switzerland, against the will of her parents, to study medicine, and obtained in 1879 her graduation diploma there. She worked for a few years as an assistant to Professor Marceli Nencki at the Faculty of Physiological Chemistry. Having passed the state examination in Petersburg, in 1883, she became one of the first female doctors in Polish lands to undertake a private gynaecological practice, in Warsaw, gaining a large popularity among indigent women whom she treated with great devotion, often selflessly. In parallel, she pursued a national activity, joining quite numerous educational and independence-oriented labours; her Warsaw house was a secretive venue where National League activists gathered and held their discussions. She died in 1921, decorated with the Polish Cross of Valour for her efforts to the benefit of the Polish Army in the course of World War One.

Zofia Daszyńska-Golińska (born in Warsaw, to an impoverished noble family) studied political economics and the history of economics in Zurich, coming into close contact with a group of Polish students advocating socialism (her first husband Feliks Daszyński was one of the most outstanding activists and Marxist publicists of that environment). She obtained her doctorate in Zurich in 1891, and subsequently continued her research work in Vienna and Berlin, as a *Dozent* with the Humboldt Academy. She then settled down in Krakow and undertook there a several years' failing endeavour to qualify as an assistant professor (so-called habilitation) with the Jagiellonian University. Apart from her work as a scientist, she devoted herself, during her entire stay in her home country, to educational activities, whilst also carrying out in-depth research on the labour and living conditions of workers and becoming involved in the women's movement and in fighting alcoholism. After Poland regained independence, she lectured at the Free Polish University [*Wolna Wszechnica Polska*] in Warsaw, and participated in political life – as a Member of the Second Republic's Senate, among her other activities. Zofia died in 1934.

The vicissitudes of Jadwiga Ostromęcka (born in Grodno Land, to a noble family) proved typical to a large number of women who in the late years of the 19th century sought out the most various ways leading to knowledge and, although never completing their university education, did not neglect any opportunity for self-study, and thus became capable of conveying their abilities to following generations. Ostromęcka graduated from a Russian gymnasium in Kazan, where she originally landed together with her parents, who had been deported after the January Insurrection. She then studied a series of, more or less formal, courses in Kazan and in Krakow, and spent a year of her life at London's British Museum Library. At the same time, since her young years, she worked as a teacher herself – first, with children from the Polish community in Kazan and subsequently, at the noble manors of the Grodno region; finally, the beginning of 20th century took her to a boarding school in Warsaw, where she lasted until World War Two. The history of her life, as was the case with so many female teachers in the late 19th and early 20th century, excellently complemented the life paths of the leading educational and social women-activists of the time – to name Jadwiga Szczawińska-Dawidowa, Cecylia Śniegocka, or Stefania Sempołowska.

One more woman to be evoked in this context is Oktawia Radziwiłłowiczówna (born in Petersburg, the daughter of a doctor of repute), descended from a family of merit in Polish science and culture: Rafał Radziwiłłowicz, an outstanding psychiatrist and social activist, was her blood brother; Zygmunt Chmielewski, a theorist of co-operative activities and a socialist activist was her half-brother. Bolesław Prus was one of her closer friends. As a very young girl, she was married to a former insurgent, exile, and convict once sentenced to hard labour (*katorga*), Henryk Rodkiewicz, twenty-five years her older; her desire was, as she put it in a private letter, that her husband "could be happy at least before his death". Rodkiewicz, an ailing man, died soon after the marriage, leaving his wife with their three-month-old daughter. Oktawia undertook a job with the administration of the Nałęczów spa. She remarried in 1892, to Stefan Żeromski, supporting him thereafter in every activity and effort, taking it upon herself to run the household of a writer on the brink of a great career, and assuming part of his professional responsibilities with the National Museum of Rapperswil, Switzerland and the Zamoyski Library in Warsaw, where Żeromski worked as an assistant librarian from 1897-1903. Oktawia died in 1928, in poor mental health, resulting from many dramatic years of disagreement within their marriage (finally dissolved in 1912) and the death of the couple's beloved son Adam.

These vicissitudes of these four women: intellectuals, exponents of 'reproductive' (as opposed to 'creative') intelligentsia, displaying deep knowledge and erudition, and those only partly educated regretting all their life (like Jadwiga

Ostromęcka) that they had not been lucky enough to undergo university-level studies, engaging themselves in professional labour in a variety of fields and for the most various of motives – appear typical through their diversity. This is how the biographies of the vast majority of educated Polish women were shaped; in the latter half of 19th century, they began, with increasing frequency and resoluteness, to enter the world in which one's own education gave a warranty of earning one's keep, and was the target of their life aspirations. At the same time, owing to their sense of social serviceability and their almost untiring vigour in work that benefitted others, these women proved to be true exponents of the nineteenth-century Polish intelligentsia, as such, boasting achievements and incurring keen defeats shared with the class they were identifiable with.

The Jews were another grand social group which in the late 19th/early 20th century produced members of the Polish intelligentsia. Jewish doctors (including court medicos to Polish kings) and lawyers remained present over the centuries in the professional groups among which the roots of the intelligentsia, as we comprehend the notion today, are traceable. In the 18th century, the Polish Jewry was informed, on the one hand, by the influences of the Jewish Enlightenment movement Haskalah, and on the other, by countrywide and pan-European phenomena which resulted, at the close of the pre-Partition Commonwealth, in the development of a qualitatively new community. Its members earned a living thanks to their own education and mental or intellectual activity – and, moreover, became aware of their distinctiveness from other layers of the society. The actual Jewish people's share in this community remains undeterminable, though, until the latter half of the 19th century. It was only the formal equalisation of the Jewish and non-Jewish populaces' legal situation that opened for the former the way to all the intelligentsia-related trades, providing, by the way, our contemporary historians with the tools to make the nationality structure of the intelligentsia in Polish lands researchable.

After the January Insurrection was repressed, the Positivists – Polish thinkers as well as representatives of certain Jewish milieus – believed assimilation to be the future for the Polish Jewry, regardless of their version: moderate (religion and customs still observed) or radical, the latter being understood as a complete adaptation to Polishness.

The Jews in the Polish territory were most quickly assimilated in the Prussian Partition; there, however, it meant integration into German culture. The way was paved, primarily, by the orders issued in the 1830s by Eduard Flotwell, Over-President of the Poznań Province, enabling Jews to participate in the Prussian state structures; freedom of migration deeper inside Prussia and Germany contributed to the trend as well. The assimilation of Jews into Russianness was

an equally significant phenomenon. As for assimilation with Polish culture, it occurred at a later date and was much more distributed in time. However, in the Kingdom of Poland and in Western Galicia, the trend did play a considerable part – exceeding its objective, numerical record.

Throughout the nineteenth century (1800-1903), about 1,500 instances of Jews changing their religion – from a Mosaic to a Christian confession, were recorded in Warsaw. By comparison, the Warsaw Jewish Religious Community had at that time between a few dozen thousand and ca. 300,000 members (306,000 in 1910). Conversions like these occurred rarely in Galicia too. However, among those for whom the assimilation was crowned by switching to a new religion, one can see illustrious writers, scientists, bankers, artists, and individuals of immense merit for Polish culture, science and economy. The families of Kronenberg, Bersohn, Kramsztyk, Natanson, Nussbaum, Kraushar, Lewental, Epstein, Feldman, or Słonimski deserve being mentioned, and never neglected, in this context. At least an equal number of intellectuals of Jewish descent were subject to consecutive stages of the assimilation process, never concluding it with a religious conversion. Intellectuals as outstanding as Ludwik Gumplowicz, Ludwik Zamenhof, or Herman Diamand remained non-believers. In the first place, though, the Polish intelligentsia accepted in the late 19th/early 20th century a considerable number of Jews and people of Jewish origin who identified themselves with Polish culture, never breaking the bonds with their own tradition and confession. These occurrences evade description in terms of objective numbers. A Russian census of 1897, whereby 13% of Kingdom dwellers declared themselves as Mosaic (i.e. Jewish) religion confessors and considered themselves Poles, offers an indicative figure. It is most probably legitimate to infer that the professions characteristic to the intelligentsia accounted for at least a significant portion within this group.

The assimilation of Jews and their participation in Polish public life became in the latter half of the 19th and in the 20th century the object of animated debate, of which more will be said in Chapter 4. With time, the process of 'turning Polish' became increasingly difficult for Jews. As a result, in the first years of the 20th century, the Jewish intelligentsia in Polish lands was diversified intellectually, spiritually, and linguistically; moreover, deep divisions appeared within this community with regards to their attitude toward Polish culture and Polish aspirations for independence.

A peculiar group was formed of the 'learned in Talmud' – those whose ties with the Jewish tradition were the strongest: rabbis and their students, using Hebrew as their language. Its intellectual values no doubt allow us to categorise this group as part of the intelligentsia; still, these people lived isolated not

just from Polish society but also, from a large part of the Jewish milieus. Along with the group in question, the Yiddish-speaking Jewish intelligentsia – drawing upon its native tradition, combined with the specificity of Polish-Jewish small towns (*shtetleh*) – was gaining in importance at the century's turn. Starting with the 1890s, its most outstanding exponents: Sholem Asch (born Szalom Asz), Isaac Bashevis Singer, and Itzik Manger, promoted Yiddish-language literature to an international standard. Yet another community of importance consisted of the Polish intelligentsia's representatives of Jewish descent: writers, scientists, scholars, artists, and publishers, each of them at a different stage of the assimilation and acculturation process, and facing their related challenges. For some of them (primarily, representatives of the affluent intelligentsia, tied by means of numerous contacts within the Polish milieus), complete assimilation, up to the religious conversion, took an almost peaceable and irreversible course. Others found unbearable the need to abandon their own tradition and the attacks they suffered from Polish nationalists and Jewish orthodoxies, and this led to a sense of doubt and to personal tragedies. It was with such choices in mind that Wilhelm Feldman, a Krakow critic and fiction writer, wrote his novel *Żydziak* ['The Yid'], whose title character claimed pompously: "I have enjoyed no luminosity, or delight unadulterated; I don't know what freedom is, what laughter and youthful wantonness is, what embracement is, or endearment… In a perennial pain, ceaselessly contending – with paucity, with the enemy, with a stormy mind… with abatises bristling… So have my days been flowing down."[10]

While a historian becomes helpless if faced with the task of minutely assessing the assimilation of Jews into Polishness, an effort can still be made to illustrate the phenomenon with the use of individual biographies of Polish intellectuals, and intelligentsia exponents, of Jewish origin. Seen among them are representatives of several generations, and of various attitudes assumed over more than half a century: from full assimilation, crowned by baptism (in the case of Julian Klaczko, Aleksander and Jadwiga Kraushar, and, Salomon and Hortensja Lewental), through Polishness accepted in spite of retaining the inherited religion (as with Bolesław Hirszfeld, Wilhelm Feldman), or indifference, audaciously declared, with respect to religious issues in general (socialist Herman Diamand), to rejecting the assimilation and standing for Zionism instead – the example being Apolinary Hartglas.

10 Wilhelm Feldman, *Żydziak. Szkic psychologiczno-społeczny* ['The Yid. A psychological-social sketch'], Lwów 1889, p. 287.

Julian Klaczko (1825-1906), the oldest of the intellectuals referred to, a journalist, poet, art historian, and political activist, was born Jehuda Lejb, the son of a well-to-do merchant from Wilno. He was brought up in an environment of educated Jews, and wrote, since his early youth, poems in Hebrew and in Polish, with equal proficiency. He joined the revolutionary plots of the 1840s. And, he was a great admirer of Polish Romanticist poetry, Mickiewicz in particular. He later changed his political views and became an associate of the Czartoryski family, and a confirmed conservative; in his declining years, he worked as a diplomat in Austria's service. In 1856, after his father's death, he was baptised as a Catholic, and Catholic religiosity played an increasing role in his life thereafter. Befriended with Julian, Count Stanisław Tarnowski, literary historian and outstanding representative of the Krakow conservatives' milieu, observed that, as far as Klaczko's outward appearance, spiritual formation and temper were concerned, "there was nothing indicative of [his] Jewish descent; rather than that, [he was] of the Polish nobleman's type".

Aleksander Kraushar (pseudonym Alkar; 1843-1932) was a historian, lawyer, and poet; he was a personage that for a few dozen years played an important part in the intellectual, as well as social, life of Warsaw. He commenced his public activity during the January Insurrection. In the course of the following decades, he authored quite a number of historical works (most of which concerned his family town); he co-founded and chaired the Society of Lovers of History; his hospitable salon constituted for many years an important centre in Warsaw's intellectual life. In 1902, he adopted the Catholic faith, together with his wife Jadwiga, née Bersohn, and brother-in-law Salomon (Franciszek-Salezy) Lewental, a meritorious publisher, and sister-in-law Hortensja, née Bersohn. Their baptism was an important and widely commented upon event in the life of the Warsaw intellectual elite. Kraushar's biography was symptomatic of the complete assimilation of a Jewish intellectual, ultimately, fully identifying himself spiritually and culturally with the Polish environment. A grandson of Meir and son of Herszel (Herman), and a broker at the Warsaw Stock-Exchange, Aleksander gradually departed from his Jewish origins, till he was christened. His life was a "history of a man whose career began with studies on the Jewish past and was concluded by a rejection of the Jewish present"[11]. A no-lesser role in this history was played by Aleksander's wife Jadwiga (1853-1912), the eldest daughter of Matthias Bersohn, a Warsaw industrialist and financier, who was also a social worker and art

11 Jacob Shatzky (Szacki), *Alexander Kraushar and His Road to Total Assimilation*, 'YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Studies', New York 1952, vol. 7, p. 174.

collector. Jadwiga's contribution to the educational work and intellectual life of late 19th and early 20th century Warsaw made her one of the self-emancipating women of bourgeois or noble descent, who at the turn of the century became undisputed members of the Polish intelligentsia.[12]

The life of Bolesław Hirszfeld, 1849-99, a chemist and an educational and political activist, a few years Kraushar's younger, took a completely different course. He was a native of Warsaw too, and took part in public-spirited initiatives undertaken in the late years of the 19th century to a greater degree than Alkar did. Hirszfeld was one of the pioneers of people's education in the Congress Kingdom; he assigned almost all his personal income for social purposes. Among a number of dramatic biographies of Polish intellectuals of Jewish background, his excels as particularly dramatic. Having devoted almost all his physical and intellectual powers and considerable financial resources to Polish society, and its educational and independence-related aspirations, he eventually committed suicide in Switzerland: affected psychologically by the Alfred Dreyfus affair, he had lost his faith in the possibility of a harmonious coexistence between Jews and non-Jews.

The life of Wilhelm Feldman, 1868-1919, a Galician writer, historian of literature, journalist, and politician, was, one could say, no less dramatic. His background was an indigent Hasidic family from Zbaraż (Zbarazh); brought up in a Jewish ghetto, Wilhelm was surrounded with antipathy and incomprehension, both with respect to his educational aspirations and his liking of Polishness (at the age of fifteen, on the anniversary of King John III Sobieski's relief action against the Turks near Vienna in 1638, he delivered a speech at the Zbaraż synagogue in praise of King John III Sobieski and Polish heroism, after which he was beaten by a mob of his fellow-believers for having desecrated the temple). When he was eighteen, he fled from his native town to Lwów and became from then on one of the most outstanding promoters of assimilation, along with the principles of socialism. The programme of radical assimilation that he advocated, up to the point where the Jewish language and religion are disowned, exposed him to attacks from Jewish and Polish communities alike. Feldman was an ardent independence activist during World War One. He died a year after the war ended, having adopted Catholicism by baptism on his deathbed.

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12 Cf. Maria Wierzbicka, *Z burżuazji do inteligencji: Jadwiga Krausharowa* ['From bourgeoisie to intelligentsia: the case of Jadwiga Kraushar'], in: *Kobieta i edukacja na ziemiach polskich w XIX i XX wieku* ['Woman and education in the Polish lands in 19th and 20th century'], ed. by A. Żarnowska, A. Szwarc, vol. 2, Part 2, Warszawa 1992, pp. 217-227.

The life story of Herman Diamand, 1860-1931, showed numerous similarities, alongside meaningful differences. Not much older than Feldman, Diamand came from Galicia as well, but was born to a well-off and educated Lwów-based family. Having graduated in Law from Lwów University, he entered into close contact, in the late 1880s, with a group of workmen and students forming the seeds of the socialist movement in Lwów. He was member of the first convention of the Social-Democratic Party in Lwów, in 1891, and remained part of the Party's authorities thereafter. He combined a legal practice with his responsibilities as a deputy and party-related work, and acted as a representative of Polish socialist parties for the three Partitions with the International Socialist Bureau. During the war, he operated in many fields of public life, and afterwards, in independent Poland, he was an MP, diplomat, and an outstanding economic activist. He quit the Mosaic religion and did not continue the Jewish tradition, but adopted no Christian confession instead. Herman Diamand is a good example of a large group of Polish Jews who involved themselves in the development of various currents of Polish socialism – the only political movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that in no way undermined Jewish aspirations and did not yield to anti-Semitism.

Apolinary Hartglas (1883-1953), the last, and youngest, of the intellectuals deserving a mention here, was also an attorney and parliamentary representative, but his generational experience and the choices he made in his life made him a considerably different case than Herman Diamand. Hartglas was born in Biała-Podlaska, the son of a Warsaw-born, totally assimilated lawyer. His family spoke only Polish, did not go to the synagogue, and did not observe traditional rituals. As a boy, Hartglas identified himself with his Polish environment, to the extent that he took on board its anti-Jewish phobias: "when a child, I was an anti-Semite", he recollected. Later, however, during his law studies at Warsaw University, he came across the Zionist movement and its activists, such as Isaac Leib Peretz, Nahum Sokolov and Izaak (Yitzhak) Grünbaum. Crucial, however, to his decision to join the Zionist camp was not the example set by his friends and comrades but his becoming clearly aware of the inimical attitude of the world, in general, and of Polish society, in particular, toward Jews, including those unconditionally assimilated. As Grünbaum, befriended with Hartglas, could remember, "Hartglas's Zionism was rooted, primarily, in his deeply developed sense of his own honour, which was strongly insulted by the demeaning situation of the Jewish nation."

As a result of his decision, Hartglas became, from 1906, the co-editor of *Głos Żydowski*, the first Zionist weekly published in Warsaw in the Polish language; he subsequently joined the *Życie Żydowskie* editorial team. In the Second Republic

period, he was an MP and pursued his legal practice, acting as a barrister in political trials. After World War Two broke out, in 1940, he went to Jerusalem, but long cherished the hope that we would return to Poland one day. The pogroms that took place in Krakow, Kielce and other Polish towns after the war ended impelled him to stay in Israel. It was only in 1947, six years before he died, that he finally relinquished his Polish citizenship.

These summarised biographies reflect the various choices Polish intellectuals of Jewish descent were faced with and made in their lives over a few decades – between the mid-nineteenth century and the Great War. After 11th November 1918, the date recognised as Poland's reinstated independence, these outlined phenomena grew even severer. For some, the said date crowned long years of endeavours undertaken together with Poles; for others, it passed unnoticed; some others still considered it yet another warning: it seems symbolic that a pogrom of Jews took place on that very day in Kielce, with four casualties as the outcome. On the other hand, 1918 opened a period of unprecedented development for the Jewish intelligentsia in Poland, its quantum numerical leap and its promotion across almost all the areas of science and culture that took place in the Interwar period – i.e. the two decades between the two World Wars.

Chapter 2: Styles of life

The eventful social phenomena covered so far: the pauperisation of the nobility; the liberation of women and the emancipation of the Jewry, were not the only challenges faced by the Polish intelligentsia during the second half of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century. This period was also marked by considerably deepening differences in the standards and styles of life of the individual groups classed as '(the) intelligentsia'. Family and social connections, professional career, the size of one's clientele – for the liberal professions, and the simple fact of having a permanent job or tenure, with an opportunity to fulfil one's potential with the learned and trained line-of-work, plus residence in one of the country's intellectual centres, or in the provinces: all these factors determined not only the intelligentsia member's welfare but also his, or her, style of life and hierarchy of values.

It might apparently seem that the gap between a wealthy professor of medicine in Warsaw or Krakow, pursuing an extensive practice among the city's financial elites, and a student renting out a bed in a shared room, or, a provincial-town teacher, was much greater than any inter-Partition difference, and much harder to eliminate than the dislike with which women, or Jews-under-assimilation, were 'welcomed' into the labour market. Given the context, it could also seem that to speak of a bond tying the intelligentsia as a whole, and of an ethos shared by all the members of this social group, would be an abuse on the part of a historian, with his or her apparent thirst for simple models.

1. The financial and property elites

The Polish intelligentsia's financial/property elites, forming the social elite, dwelled in the central quarters of large cities – first of all, Warsaw, Krakow and Lwów; Poznań, Petersburg, Kiev and Vienna were seen on this map too. This community was formed of a few hundred families, bonded by strong social and family ties with the local affluent bourgeoisie and aristocracy. Certain representatives of these elites were situated at the intersection of these strata, and could equally well be classified as part of the plutocracy or the landed gentry, or, the intelligentsia. By way of example, let us mention Ludwik Górski, a prominent publicist, editor, and protector of various publications, landed-gentry activist

and, simply, a landowner with a distinguished professional background and substantial achievements to his credit (in his estate at Sterdynia, in Podlachia, received as a dowry for his wife Paulina, née Krasińska, he was one of the first to introduce the draining of swamps and marshes, and set up new granges on the dried out areas). Count Wiktor Baworowski, an official with the governorship office in Lwów, is another one worth mentioning: he was moreover a man-of-letters, a collector and a bibliophile, famous for his large estate and for an even greater avarice. He assigned almost all of his pecuniary means for the purchase of valuable and rare books, across the country and abroad. The moment he died, in 1894, the collection of books he had amassed featured 15,571 volumes of prints, 1,800 manuscripts and 10,000 engravings; these all became the resource of a library Baworowski had founded in Lwów. Let us moreover mention the Warsaw families of the Kronenbergs and the Natansons: their members would switch, within one or two generations, from the bourgeoisie to the intelligentsia. Sponsors at first, they later turned into sponsors and co-creators of Polish culture and science.

The social group for whom mental, intellectual or cultural work was but one of their several domains of activity was surrounded by a circle of people who associated themselves with the aristocracy or the bourgeoisie by means of family ties, while keeping their professions strictly typical of the intelligentsia. Again, a few names can be quoted as an example, starting with the great actress Helena Modrzejewska, married to Karol Chłapowski, the nephew of General Dezydery Chłapowski from Turwia (now, Turew). The name of Michał Elwiro Andriolli, the painter and draughtsman, married to Natalia, née Tarnowska, also comes to mind. Or, Jan Karłowicz, an ethnographer, linguist, musician, publisher of dictionaries of local Polish dialects, and editor of *Wisła* magazine from 1887-99, who was married to Irena Sulistrowska, with an affinity for and maintaining family contacts with the Radziwiłłs, among others. The example of Edward Leo suggests itself too: this lawyer and current affairs commentator, and editor of Warsaw's *Gazeta Polska* from 1875-97, was related and affined to some great families of the Warsaw plutocracy, for example, with Leopold Kronenberg. The salons of families such as Górski, Chłapowski, Leo, or Karłowicz in Warsaw, those run by the Pareńskis or by Władysław Żeleński in Krakow, became the venues where, in a natural way, an exchange took place between various social groups, and opportunities were conceived for winning round science and culture sponsors-to-be.

This circle was, in turn, surrounded by another, much larger environment of wealthy intelligentsia elites, reproducing themselves within their own community, maintaining over a number of decades an unchangeably high standard

of living and social connections. These were established by representatives of various professions characteristic of creative as well as reproductive intelligentsia members: scientists, doctors, journalists, writers – and, publishers, whose houses often became the venues where literary milieus were integrated, thoughts exchanged, and intellectual incitements received (the Warsaw houses of the Gebethners, Lewentals, Leos, or Dionizy Henkiel, the Wilds of Lwów, or the Leitgebers of Poznań deserve a mention). They differed as to living standards; for instance, the dwelling of Dionizy Henkiel, the publicist, critic and man-of-letters, consisted of two cubbyholes above the stables in a back-premises, whilst Messieurs Lewental or Gebethner lived in the tenement houses they owned. Usually, however, these people were rather prosperous. In terms of affluence, artists and writers enjoying an established position – scarce in number as they were – were, obviously enough, in the lead wealth-wise. They enjoyed a nationwide repute, but the recognition of some extended beyond their home country: apart from the numerous high royalties and tokens of recognition that he received, Henryk Sienkiewicz was granted the estate and mansion in Oblęgorek, a locality in the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, purchased with funds raised by society and offered to the novelist in 1900 on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his literary activity. The painter Wojciech Kossak struck it rich on private commissions from Polish aristocrats and landholders, along with members of the Hohenzollern and Habsburg dynasties. 'Master Jan', the idolised painter Jan Matejko, ought not to be neglected either: he too created quite a number of his paintings just for money, and made it plain to the collector Ignacy Korwin Milewski: "My purpose is to paint whatever they might demand", and was once ready to represent, in exchange for 20,000 florins, King John Albert's (Jan Olbracht's) defeat in Bukovina on the order of a Romanian patron, who shrank at hearing the price the painter quoted.

The living conditions and lifestyle of three medics, noted at the turn of the century, may add to the picture – all the more purposefully, and making it even more variegated, as the period's medical milieu summarised almost all the maladies of the intelligentsia as such. Hence, instances of striking affluence and cases of poverty and joblessness coincided within it.

Ignacy Baranowski, a distinguished Warsaw surgeon, was initially an assistant to Tytus Chałubiński and then, a professor with Warsaw University; it is worth mentioning that he was forced to leave the chair in 1884, as he had refused to converse in Russian, appearing as a witness at a court. Yet, university work was not the basis of his subsistence: he pursued an enormous consulting practice in Warsaw and in almost the whole Kingdom of Poland. Doctor Baranowski had a multi-bedroom apartment in Warsaw, in a tenement house at Krakowskie-Przedmieście Street; together with his wife Julia, née Bąkowska, he

managed a reputed salon where exponents of science and culture met, to name T. Chałubiński, B. Prus, H. Sienkiewicz, N. Żmichowska, E. Orzeszkowa, and many others. He maintained a house he owned in Zakopane, which he called 'Soplicowo' (after the noble manor site portrayed in Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*). The house acted for many years as a focus for Polish cultural life, uniting people from all three Partitions. Baranowski was moreover capable of managing his time and means well enough to extensively travel across all of Europe.

As part of his extremely busy public activity, Baranowski organised and, to a remarkable extent, financially supported the clinic at the Infant Jesus Hospital in Warsaw, amassed funds for antituberculotic sanatoria and for the formation of a 'Tytus Chałubiński' Tatra-Mountains Museum in Zakopane. He advocated the publication of a *Dictionary of Polish Language*, and was one of the co-founders of the Warsaw periodical *Ateneum*. He supported and provided funding for the activities of Konrad Prószyński in the field of folk education, was one of founders of the Józef Mianowski Fund (*Kasa im. Józefa Mianowskiego*) and was among the initiators and collectors of funds for Warsaw University of Technology. Next, he was the co-originator of the Warsaw Scientific (resp. Learned) Society [*Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie*]. He keenly took part in political life, and formed after 1894, a conciliatory faction, together with Włodzimierz Spasowicz.

Another representative of the intellectual and financial elite, and an outstanding physician too, was Karol Benni, very likely the most outstanding Polish otologist (ear/hearing pathology specialist) of his time. Like Baranowski, he pursued an extensive practice across the country, and held shares in the Nałęczów health centre, where he practised as a doctor in the summer season. Benni also ran a well-known salon in Warsaw – the famous 'Fridays', serving as, probably, the most important Warsaw forum of thought exchange and social initiatives (more will be said of it later on). He would so entertain a few dozen guests every week, treating them to *starka* (mature rye vodka) and *wiśniak* cherry liqueur, the best in Warsaw, along with a substantial dinner. Benni was also a keen traveller; he toured almost the whole of Europe, Asian Russia, and the United States. Again, like Baranowski, Doctor Benni was an unwearied social activist and philanthropist (and was supported in this respect by his wife Luiza, née Szepietowska); he chaired the free-of-charge reading libraries of the Warsaw Charity Society, was Vice-President of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts, formed a Society for Support of the Folk Industry, co-established the Museum of Industry and Technology, was an activist with the Museum of Industry and Agriculture, and was co-founder of the *Medycyna* periodical – to name some of his major endeavours. Both as a private practitioner and as a factory physician, he repeatedly treated or operated on his patients for free.

Stanisław Pareński was another such prominent doctor. Pursuing his practice in Krakow, he was professor of medical diagnostics at the Jagiellonian University and *prymariusz* (Head Physician) at Krakow's St Lazarus Hospital; like his two colleagues mentioned above, he founded his income upon extensive private practices in Krakow, Małopolska (Lesser Poland), and even in the Kingdom's regions adjacent to Galicia. (This activity partly contributed to his death, as he fell out of a train going toward the frontier, and was killed as a result of this accident.) Pareński's social standing was, again, the salon he ran, being the most popular meeting point for Krakow's cultural elite; it was there that Stanisław Wyspiański read out fragments of his *Wesele*, before the play was staged.

Clearly enough, the affluence achieved by the most popular practitioner doctors, most sought-after painters, writers, barristers, or publishers was not attainable to many members of Warsaw's, Krakow's of Lwów's intellectual elites, regardless of their work and effort. Many most prominent Polish artists of the time suffered permanent or accidental financial troubles, especially if they were endowed with large families, were affected by some afflictions, or, simply, lived beyond their means. Exemplary of the latter category stands Tadeusz Rutowski, a Galician social and political activist, an official with the Country Department (the executive body of the Galician local government), and Deputy Mayor of Lwów in his declining years. According to Henryka Kramarz, his biographer, Rutowski was deep in debt over his lifetime, including the years he was member of the top city authorities' team; he had to pay off promissory notes, his Country Department salary was repeatedly withheld, and he took advantage of his father's financial help for years. His situation was formed by the need to bring home the bacon (Rutowski had four children); this was combined with his attachment to keeping an open table, typical to the intelligentsia elites (together with his wife Jadwiga, née Bogdańska, Rutowski kept a frequented salon in Lwów, and travelled a great deal); and, seemingly, the fact that his entire income originated from his own intellectual work. The said biographer confronts his lifestyle with the intellectual-landowner model, then already becoming history. An exponent of this model was his father Klemens, an attorney of renown in Tarnów, and a proprietor of two estates located near the town. Klemens's income in the latter half of the 19th century ensured a prosperous existence for his family, which composed of his wife and two children. His son's income a few dozen years later turned out to be insufficient, a result of increased needs and demands.

Similarly too-exiguous was the income gained by the literary historian Piotr Chmielowski, based on his immense publications and activity as a teacher with private secondary schools or houses. Again, the necessity to maintain a large family (this man had a wife and four children), and the ailment Chmielowski

suffered, forced this outstanding scholar to seek unconventional, if not desperate, ways of replenishing the family budget. When he came down with tuberculosis and had to move to Zakopane in early 1898, the means for the removal and the securing the family's subsistence, once in their new home, had to immediately be drawn from retailing one of the books he authored, by way of distribution of its bookselling stock.

Ignacy Radliński, the classical philologist and religious specialist, having squandered away his wife's assets on books, became incapable of providing for her and their two children; as his daughter Helena Boguszewska put it, "the family's entire life pressed down with books" went to his credit. With lost hope for any better, his wife finally moved to Krakow, with their daughter, whilst Radliński entirely immersed himself in studying, meeting his friends and completing his library by, among other things, allocating considerable money to importing books from abroad.

The situation [of] Maria Konopnicka had to cope with was even more realistic, and really dramatic: having left her husband, she endeavoured to subsist herself and her four children (a mentally disabled girl among them), in Warsaw, on her literary work. And this became feasible thanks to the benevolent and solidary attitude of her environment, including an annual salary of 150 roubles assigned by the J. Mianowski Fund, from the resources bequeathed to her by Eliza Orzeszkowa.

With all the visible differences occurring in the income of the members of the intellectual elite, the latter nonetheless formed a well-knit milieu, bonded with tight affinity, kinship, and friendship (and, animosities), not infrequently reaching beyond the Partitions' limits. It might even be stated that at the turn of the 20th century, the group in question, numbering, probably, a dozen-or-so thousand members, was already capable of self-reproduction. A minute tracing of those ties across the three provinces would enable one to develop a fascinating map of mutual interrelations and, perhaps, help one understand the number of behaviours, initiatives – or, on the contrary, prejudices and intrigues, for which that network, still unsatisfactorily recognised, formed the background.

The intellectual elite, strictly related to one another, being simultaneously an elite of measurable financial income, had shared focuses of interest and forms of entertainment, and a similar lifestyle where continual informal contact had the primary say. Of special importance were meetings at private salons; likewise, at publishing houses, magazine editorial houses, restaurants or cafés. The Warsaw intelligentsia's crème-de-la-crème would meet at Deotyma's, Dr Benni's, Dr Baranowski's, Mr. Henkiel's, the Kraushars', or in one of the many other houses too. They would have a meal and a beverage at the restaurant run by Ms. Czuleńska

or Mr. Stępkowski (Stępek) on Wierzbowa Street, or, at Mr. Lijewski's (Lij) on Krakowskie-Przedmieście Street; at the patisserie Lourse housed within the Europejski Hotel, or the Semadeni cake-shop within the Wielki (Grand) Theatre edifice; or, at the Fukier winery in the Old Town Market Square. They would comment on the new trends and fashions in art at the exhibition salons of Krywult and Unger, exchange tidings and gossip in the editorial offices of *Kurier Warszawski*, *Kurier Codzienny* or *Biblioteka Warszawska*.

In Lwów, the salons run by the Wilds or the Rutowskis turned into the most popular meeting venues. The most important salon in Krakow was run by the Pareńskis on Wielopole Street; another such meeting spot was the house of 'the Sewers' (the hosts being Ignacy Maciejowski, a writer using the pseudonym 'Sewer', and his wife Maria, née Günther), or 'Kossakówka' manor, ran by the Kossaks; males attended their parties at Ludwik Michałowski's, or at the musical salon of Władysław Żeleński. In Galicia or, more specifically, in the Krakow area, the meetings stayed closer to the traditional formula of the salon as a place of social contact and the exchange of literary news, and, contrary to what occurred, of necessity, at the time in Warsaw, did not turn into a forge of a number of society-oriented initiatives. The main current of Krakow's life went through the local aristocratic houses: even the most merited exponents of the intelligentsia were socially ennobled when invited to the Potocki's 'Pod Baranami' Palace, whilst exclusion from that circle (one of the affected was Wojciech Kossak, for instance) stood as a grievous offence against the excluded individual's honour. The map of the 'spots' of importance to Galician intellectuals ought not to miss the most popular restaurants and cafés, with 'Turek' in Lwów and 'Lwowska' (that is, 'Jama Michalika' ['Michalik's Den'; also named 'Jama Michalikowa']) in Krakow at the forefront.

There were also salons which, by design, were meant to help sustain inter-Partition contact. The salon of Dr Karol Benni's and that of Wanda Marrené-Morzkowska, a writer, in Warsaw, played a part of this sort; in Krakow, so did the salon managed by Józef Kotarbiński and his wife Lucyna, née Kleczeńska. Kotarbiński was a penman, an actor and a stage director, active before then in Warsaw; in 1893, he was made 'senior stage director' and then, Director of the Miejski Theatre in Krakow; the Kotarbińskis' house was frequented by Krakow actors, theatre workers and writers, Adam Asnyk and Ignacy 'Sewer' Maciejowski among them; guests from Warsaw, for example, Mr. and Mrs. Kraushar and others, visited the place too. 'Soplicowo', the so-named manor owned by Ignacy Baranowski, was a no less hospitable house, visited by Poles from all the Partitions and from the emigration.

Theatre occupied an important place in the intellectual elites' social and cultural life. The turn of the twentieth century was a period of thorough stylistic breakthroughs in acting and stage directing Europe-wide – and, possibly, of

the greatest triumphs of theatrical art ever in history. Theatre was the primary entertainment of the elites of Krakow, Lwów, and Poznań and, quite clearly, a number of smaller, provincial hubs where touring troupes were hosted or local amateur, or semi-amateur, ensembles were active. One of the important, and consciously implemented, tasks for Galician theatres, especially those in Krakow, was to provide the comers from the other Partitions with patriotic emotions; attending plays such as Władysław-Ludwik Anczyc's *Kościuszko pod Racławicami*, Eliza Bośniacka's *Obrona Częstochowy* ['The Defence of Częstochowa'] or, later on, Wyspiański's performances, was an indispensable item on the agenda for a visitor to Krakow – similar to the affection triggered by a visit to the Wawel Cathedral, or a walk up the Kościuszko Mound.

Yet, theatromania was most strongly developed in Warsaw, where the theatre was probably the only available politics-free and commonly accepted form of entertainment. In parallel, the local theatrical institutions – those under the umbrella of the Warsaw Government Theatres and at least some of the private ones – were characterised by relatively high stage-direction and performance standards. (The performers were not limited to natives: Warsaw stages often hosted eminent troupes from Moscow and Petersburg, showing plays by Ostrovsky, Krylov, Gogol, and Griboedov). As a result, Warsaw theatres acted as a peculiar 'replacement' object of interest (which under normal social-political conditions would probably have been provided by parliamentary or, more broadly, political life); anything taking place on the stage aroused enormous collective emotion. This is how Helena Modrzejewska was gaining her vertiginous popularity, and how veritable wars broke out between the '*czakist*s', i.e. lovers of Jadwiga Czaki's talent, the '*trapist*s' – adherents of Irena Trapszówna, or '*wisnowczyk*s' – which meant the fans of Maria Wisnowska. The murder of Wisnowska, who was killed in 1890 by her Russian paramour, became – within the context so outlined – a commonly lamented tragedy and a scandal that perturbed Warsaw for several months. The peculiar 'apolitical' trait of the period's theatre caused that Warsaw periodicals – specialist ones and widely-read dailies alike – maintained large, extensive theatre sections; theatrical reviews were written by critics and writers of renown.

The theatres of Łódź played, at the century's turn, a similar role, though on a smaller scale; after 1905, so did their peer Wilno and Kiev institutions.

2. The provincial intelligentsia and the 'intelligent proletariat'

The overproduction of the intelligentsia, which in the latter half of the 19th century affected Europe as a whole, its eastern borderland in particular,

determined the situation and social status of the educated stratum in the Polish territories too. Secondary schools, Polish universities in Galicia, the higher schools of Russia, Germany and Austro-Hungary, and foreign institutions too: all those centres issued hundreds and thousands of young graduates year by year and decade after decade, not all could be absorbed by the Polish labour market, all the more that it could not ensure them all an equitable financial status. As mentioned before, there were several factors contributing to this situation; the essential ones apparently included the inadequate number of jobs the public administration could offer, and an underestimation of the civilisation-related and cultural needs within society. As a result, in the course of fifty years between the January Insurrection and the Great War – that unique 'golden age' in the history of the Polish intellectual elites – the pool of the indigent, underestimated intelligentsia was expanding. These people hanged on to their poorly paid posts and career expectations – dependent upon their mighty protectors, with no prospects for professional development or prestige-enhancing promotion. On the one hand, it was at that very time that the intelligentsia's self-awareness – as a separate, homogeneous layer, pursuing its own, quite specific purposes – became established, on an unprecedented scale; on the other hand, the gap between the living standard of the 'high' intelligentsia, from the wealthy districts of big cities, and the provincial intelligentsia and 'intelligent proletariat' from the metropolitan peripheries, was deepening.

The Polish provincial intelligentsia has been the focus of historians' interest a few times; however, the picture they have drawn so far still remains incomplete. Its completion is all the more difficult that the differences between the Partitions' hinterland areas were made incomparably more evident than those characterising the professional elites of Warsaw, Krakow, Lwów, Poznań, and Wilno.

The most numerous group forming the intelligentsia of medium-sized and small towns consisted of local state and local-government officials; their number, social prestige, and participation in their province's social and cultural life was dependent upon the partitioner state's internal structures, and also upon how big the centre where they held their offices was. Particularly creative with regards to the output of the local bureaucracy were the cities and towns of Galicia. The development of autonomous institutions meant that local hubs agglomerated strong clerical corps of a few dozen to a few hundred people, related to the regional and municipal institutions; these were complemented by office workers employed with the state railways, not quite ramified but continually developing, and with post offices. In the late 19th/early 20th century, clerical milieus formed a significant share of the populations of urban settlements such as Tarnów, Rzeszów, Przemyśl, Nowy-Sącz, Stryj [today, Stryi in the Ukraine],

Tarnopol [Ternopil, Ukraine], Stanisławów [Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine]. They followed an elaborated and peculiar style of life, and had their specific posts (casinos, in the first place) as their favourite pastimes; moreover, these milieus occupied a fixed important position in the town's social hierarchy. On a micro level, this phenomenon reappeared in smaller hubs too. In towns such as Łańcut, or Krzeszowice, the role of public administration officials or clerks was taken over by private officials dealing with the management of fee-tail estates remaining in the hands of grand aristocratic families. A growth burst of Galician office workers implied, however, their deteriorated financial status. Paweł Ciompa in his *Drożyzna w Galicji i nędza urzędnicza* ['High prices in Galicia and clerical poverty'] (Lwów 1913) quotes numerous examples of destitution suffered by this group: the meticulous calculations made by this author have shown that for the majority of badly paid white-collar workers, going to theatre was an entertainment completely beyond their reach, or at least was an alternative option to a hot meal during the day, to buying a pack of cigarettes, or travelling to work by tramway.

The numerical force, importance, and the professional and intellectual standard of the Polish clerical corps in Galicia certainly excelled in comparison to the other two Partitions, but clerks and officials constituted an important part of the provincial intelligentsia regardless of the place. The Russification of offices was never seen through to the end in the Kingdom of Poland, and Polish people formed a significant group in local-level public administration over the entire period. The size of this group was larger in the lower ranked offices, the less respected it was as a degree in the clerical career and the lower its prestige. The result was that Poles without realistic career prospects were in the majority with regards to the headcount of the local and municipal offices of small towns. This situation engendered humiliation and frustration, whilst a generally poor educational background came as the result of the relatively modest professional requirements posed to low-rank white collars. In late 19th/early 20th century, some publicists identified a 'clerical proletariat' as a steadily growing number of low-ranking office workers, poorly educated and poorly paid, doomed to low social prestige, constantly exposed to redundancy and the loss of one's job. Their standing was additionally upset by the civilisational turn described as 'from manuscript to typescript', which occurred at the turn of the century. Modern typewriters were manufactured from 1873 at the Remington plant, in the State of New York. At the beginning of the 20th century, and especially in the Great War years, typewriting had already become the standard and, consequently, virtually the number-one skill of the rank-and-file office worker, incomparably easier to master than the old art of calligraphy.

A similar degradation of the clerical class occurred in the Prussian Partition area, where a major and distinguished role was played by private clerks and scribes, working for Polish landed estates. Seen against this background, the specificity of the Stolen Lands grew all the more apparent: after the January Insurrection's defeat, local educated Poles were almost completely ousted from their government jobs, and Polish public life came to a standstill and remained frozen for a few dozen years – until the outbreak of the 1905 Revolution.

Liberal professions were positioned incomparably higher in the social hierarchy. Traditionally, this group included lawyers (barristers and public notaries), doctors and pharmacists. In the course of the nineteenth century, there appeared to be taking root in the social reality, new occupations such as journalists associated with the central and provincial press, booksellers, librarians, engineers working for state-owned or private companies, and photographers. They were also affected by the surplus of the intelligentsia, but their social status was still much superior to that of an office worker. Essential geographical differences were perceptible also among this professional group: the Partition's political situation, the strength of the prospective clientele, and the population of the hub where they pursued their practice, all had a substantial bearing on the living standard, prestige and satisfaction yielded by the work being done. In Galicia's county and district towns, the standard of living among liberal professionals was relatively high, and entrenched. Some of them combined their practice-based income and gains yielded by a purchased, or inherited, estate.

In Wielkopolska (Greater Poland) or, especially, in the Pomerania province, the representatives of liberal professions were much less numerous. They had to face substantial competition from their German professional colleagues, and were dependent on the landed gentry's protection to a much higher degree than Austrian or Russian subjects.

The situation in the Russian Partition was different still: since the 1870s, the local Positivist press propagated an organicist pattern of doctors, lawyers and teachers pursuing a civilisational mission in the materially and morally neglected provinces. This incentive supposedly played a part in some personal histories, and many a provincial physician (along with professionals in other fields) displayed a will to heal the "bondage-sick" nation[13], with the accompany-

13 Zygmunt Wasilewski, *Jan Harusewicz. Lekarz i polityk* ['Jan Harusewicz, medic and politician'], Warszawa 1935, p. 11 (quoted after: Lesław Sadowski, *Polska inteligencja prowincjonalna i jej ideowe dylematy na przełomie XIX i XX wieku* ['The Polish provincial intelligentsia and its ideological dilemmas at the turn of 20th century'], Warszawa 1988, p. 91).

ing civilisational backwardness. In practice, however, especially as time went on, such positivistic appeals subsided, turning into empty, mechanically repeated platitudes. It proved impossible for the promoters of progress and education to subsist and survive based upon their provincial clientele, so most of them returned to the capital town or some other large city, losing faith in the old ideals. In the Russian Partition, the self-employed tended to aggregate in county towns, competing against one another for a private practice that would enable them to make a living. Small towns, settlements or villages offered no chance in this respect at all. It is astonishing and impressive that this not-too-large group featured outstanding, proactive and zealous individuals, capable of earning high prestige and social respect for themselves, becoming animators of cultural and national life within the scale of their town, and region.

> The occupation of an out-of-town doctor is the most unrewarding and hardest work for one's bread and cheese – an arduous and onerous road to go […], calling for devotion […] and extraordinary traits of a human's character. Physicians in the country deserve being named true heroes and the most merited citizens of this country […]. These people are dying in harness of their trade […]. They are heroes, not even offered a room in our magazines.
> *Lekarze na prowincji* ['Doctors in the provinces'], *Prawda*, 1899, no. 13.

Priests may also be regarded as a unique sort of liberal professionals. Such classification always stirs a controversy among scholars: albeit the clergy satisfies the formal criteria as regards identification with the intelligentsia (education, living on income from headwork); yet, the clergy's lifestyle and regimen, the tight barriers surrounding them and the invariable hierarchical structure made this group distinct and different. The picture becomes even more complex given the fact that priests themselves, to the accompaniment of the period's whole Catholic press, often and markedly dissociated themselves from the intelligentsia – as a threat, in their perception, to the traditional values of Polish Catholicism; hence, they accused the intelligentsia of liberalism, socialism, and atheism. On the other hand, however, it is rather apparent that in this very time, priests willingly expressed their opinions on the most urgent social questions, in all three of the Partitions; in the public and social life of the provincial areas, their role was primary.

The general educational level and vocational skills of the Catholic clergy differed in each Partition. The primacy fell, again, to Galicia, where a network of decent theological seminaries functioned over the whole period under consideration, with the Catholic press occupying a significant place on the state's intellectual map. It was in Galicia that ultramontanism won most of its adherents: the term (Latin *ultra montes* – 'beyond the mountains') refers to a doctrine

advocating the necessity for Catholic Churches in individual countries to comply with Rome's instructions, which was related to the adoption in 1870, by the First Vatican Council, of the Papal Infallibility dogma.

The Congregation of the Resurrection [*Zmartwychwstańcy*], founded in 1842 in Rome, became very influential in Galicia; its members excelled with their extremely high intellectual values, the most eminent among them being the merited historian and conservative politician Walerian Kalinka ("anything but a friar, he was The Brain in this Congregation", according to a period account). Members of this order, approved by Pope Leo XIII only in 1888, expressed their opinions most emphatically during the January Insurrection days and right afterwards, claiming the pre-eminence of one's obligations as a Catholic rather than as a Pole, and the primacy of God and the Church above the people's ephemeral national or political passions.

The situation in the Prussian and Russian Partitions was different. In the former, the clergy's situation was determined, for a dozen-or-so years, by the 'struggle for culture' – the *Kulturkampf* policy, propagated by Chancellor Otto von Bismarck and levelled at the Catholic Church and combined, in the Polish territory, with an intensified Germanisation action.

The Church in the Russian Partition (especially in the Stolen Lands) still suffered the effects of the repressions inflicted after the January Insurrection: dissolved cloisters and seminaries, the authorities opposing the appointment of bishopric priests, diocese superiors absent for several years, all of which affected, clearly enough, the vocational education and the morale of parish priests. In parallel, the clergy's importance in the animation and upkeep of a national and cultural life was particularly high in these two Partitions, although no in-depth afterthought actually accompanied it.

The armies' officer corps is even less frequently classified as part of the intelligentsia, compared to the clergy, with the similarities and objections being similar in both cases. The Polish realities of the late 19th/early 20th century meant that service with a partitioner state's army, even though the everyday life might have made it a must, was regarded as a national apostasy and treason by a substantial fraction of public opinion. In this sense, officers of Polish nationality joining the German or Russian armed forces could not be regarded as Polish intelligentsia members. Even though they might have accounted for a considerable part of a garrison town's community, they usually would not partake in the social life of local Polish elites. The situation in the Austrian Partition was slightly different, as the acquiescence for careers of this kind extended much further there, expanding in time. An officer's career with the Habsburg army in the late 19th/early 20th century was considered to be a normal life path for young men; officers from

provincial garrisons participated in the town's life, enlarging provincial Galicia's ranks of the intelligentsia, relatively numerous already.

Should classing the clergy and army officers within this social layer arouse doubts, there is certainly no doubt as far as school teachers, of various levels, are concerned – the profession so much traditionally associated with the intelligentsia. Within that rather large group, the severest contrasts were discernible – owing to the abode as well as the quality and character of the educational institutions offering employment to teachers.

Against the background of Polish pedagogues, taken on the whole, a group of gymnasium (high school) teachers from the Galicia area definitely excelled with their thorough professional background, as has already been said; these people took part in scientific life and were associated, by occupation-related business and family and social connections, with local university professors. Gymnasium teachers (also conventionally called 'professors') from Galician counties and district towns, almost all of them males with a vocational university-level educational background, took the leading positions in the social hierarchies of their respective towns. The salaries they received – in spite of repeated complaints about how low they were – ensured them a steadfast place among the financial elite as well.

Things trended according to different patterns in the other two provinces, especially in the Russian Partition where the prestige of governmental gymnasium teachers was undermined by their ambiguous role in the Russifying educational system, and their almost complete dependence on Russian inspectors. Polish personnel endured in a significant share of local secondary schools; however, the trend of removing Poles from professorships remained until the 1890s, particularly in the Białystok region and in the Stolen Lands. There were schools in this area where teachers declaring themselves Roman-Catholic were barred from employment altogether. The charge of contribution to the Russification policy did not affect teachers employed with private schools, whose professional and intellectual level was very diverse; some of those schools, run by eminent pedagogues – notably, Wojciech Górski or Jadwiga Sikorska in Warsaw – were outstanding, but they remained ephemeral boarding or finishing schools, or out-of-town crafts schools.

Teachers, of either sex, working at elementary or folk schools enjoyed a much lower prestige, and received lower salaries, regardless of the place. As testified by recollection accounts, such teachers lived on a minimum subsistence level and had to eke out their family budgets in a variety of ways, having nothing to do with teaching. Augustyn Kalk, a teacher with a small folk school in the Greater Poland area, quotes examples of his numerous fellow workers topping up their

income as farmers, gardeners, beekeepers, communal officials, etc.; the need to earn extra wages inevitably implied the deterioration of social prestige for teachers. Similar was the situation for folk school teachers in the other two Partitions. It seems that in the Russian one, their prestige was the lowest, which had to do with the fact that folk schools were, within the Russian educational system, the main instrument of the Russification policy, the local teachers becoming its first implementers.

The teachers' dependence on the authorities, their servility, commonplace loyalty and informing activity meant that Polish intellectual elites regarded elementary-school personnel with distrust, if not disdain. The low status and low wages repulsed active and valuable individuals from becoming involved in such a job. In the Kingdom, folk-school teachers were at times employed as policemen, or sellers with the vodka monopoly. Vocational education and the standing of these teachers started improving only after 1905.

> Young teachers, having left their seminary [i.e. teacher training college], found their way to the manor, presbytery and urban intelligentsia barred, in most cases. The nationally-aware spheres stayed away from them. They did not trust them; woefully, not without a reason. It did happen that the Russian authorities would learn via the folk teacher even of slight symptoms of disloyalty from the rector, or the manor.
> Józef Włodarski, *Nauczycielstwo szkół ludowych w walce o unarodowienie szkoły* ['Folk school teachers struggle for nationalisation of schools'], in: *Nasza walka o szkołę polską (1901-1917)* ['Our battle for Polish schools, 1901-17'], ed. by B. Nawroczyński, vol. 2, Warszawa 1934, p. 284.

A private teacher, or a tutor, was a job that displayed a still poorer professional background and, therefore, even poorer prestige. For tutoring to be practised in a town or at a noble manor, a lower teacher's qualification (so-called patent) was required, which in practice was not observed everywhere. The number of private teachers active in Polish territories in late 19th/early 20th century is undeterminable, even in approximation terms, but it was certainly high (as estimated by one scholar, Białystok alone had some 800 locally active tutors in the late 19th century[14]). Most of them found it hard to earn their living, and formed a substantial share of the intelligent proletariat in more-or-less large towns. Those people's education was, in the majority of cases, as low as their income, which makes classing them as part of the intelligentsia somewhat problematic. "Any maiden, widow or spouse that has acquired a smattering and could chatter in

14 Lesław Sadowski, *Polska inteligencja prowincjonalna* …, p. 105. Foreigners teaching languages formed a substantial part of this group.

French, but had no livelihood, could well become an aspiring home teacher."[15] Characteristic, for that matter, was the case of a certain Grasylda Malinowska, a tutor from the Witebsk (Vitebsk) region, who in the mid-19th century started her activity being only furnished with a piano playing skill and knowing just a few words in German; as a result, as she put it in her memoir, with sheer simplicity, "I was always penniless". Professional requirements with respect to private teachers or tutors grew, it may be guessed, as the financial and intellectual qualities of their employers increased – be it in the Kingdom, in the Ukrainian lands, or in Greater Poland. The will and self-teaching skills characteristic to Ms. Malinowska or another self-made teacher and memoirist, Jadwiga Ostromęcka, were a rare phenomenon, to make a legitimate guess.

The life of students, writers and artists working their way up was not hanging around in poverty but, simply put, it was wretched and famished: trying to make a living by coaching, tutoring or doing odd jobs, they were often, simply, starving. Stanisław Witkiewicz dramatically and bitterly reported on a life of this kind in Warsaw. However, one finds the most symptomatic and imagination-affecting records in Stefan Żeromski's *Diary* (*Dzienniki*): in the 1880s, this author diligently noted down his pathetic income and disbursements:

11th September 1883		
Today's income		3 Zl.[oty] 10 gr.[osz]
Disbursed:		
3 copy-books, 10 gr. each	1 Zl. [-] gr.	
Copy-book for my novel	1 Zl. [-] gr.	
Candle		[-] Zl. 15 gr.
Soap		[-] Zl. 10 gr.
Pears for Mr. Zientara		[-] Zl. 10 gr.
Cigarettes	[-] Zl. 5 gr.	
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3 Zl. 10 gr.		
14th September 1883		
Mr. Zientara gave me back		2 Zl. 20 gr.
Copy-book for studies		2 Zl. 10 gr.
Copy-book for tutorials		10 gr.
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2 Zl. 20 gr.		
Pears		10 gr.
Rolls		10 gr.
Pears, afternoon		10 gr.

15 Antonina Morzkowska, *Tak było* ['And so it was'], *Niepodległość*, 1934, vol. IX, p. 200.

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30 gr.

Stefan Żeromski, *Dzienniki* ['Diary'], ed. by J. Kądziela, Warszawa 1963, pp. 248-249.

The differences determined by the place, or area, of residence of the Polish intelligentsia members, as described above, show that there was a clear division between the provincial intelligentsia – all those village doctors, teachers, notaries, or apothecaries, as portrayed by Żeromski and many other authors – and the creative intelligentsia from the main centres of thought and culture in the late 19th/early 20th century.

Although the gap between Warsaw, Krakow, Lwów and the smaller remote towns was huge, the major questions pervading the Polish intelligentsia echoed there as well; the provincial intelligentsia had to take on most of the gravest challenges this entire social stratum faced at the time. This issue has been best researched in relation to the Galician province, with monographs published on Rzeszów (by Jadwiga Szymczak-Hoff), Nowy Sącz (by Tadeusz Aleksander), or Głogów Małopolski, a tiny country-town in the Rzeszów area (by Franciszek Kotula). Studies exploring the social, cultural and communitarian life of those hubs have shown that the intelligentsia, everywhere, initiated public-spirited actions; they were the driving force of cultural progress, and the propagators of the new forms of entertainment, many of which were unknown before. This was true for Rzeszów or Nowy Sącz, where the regional press was published and institutions existed which were almost identical, though at a proportionally smaller scale, to those of the capital towns of Galicia as well as in the said Głogów of Małopolska, whose population was 3,000 (a third of which were Jews).

Głogów's intelligentsia included some 500 members (F. Kotula has identified 3 judges and 7 court officials, 3 postal-office clerks, a notary and his 4 employees, 15 folk-school teachers, 3 barristers and 3 forensic office-workers, 2 doctors, 1 pharmacist, 2 priests, 4 officials with the County Advance-Payment Fund, 2 officials with the manor and a forest management unit). As a result, a dedicated casino for the intelligentsia functioned there, called 'lordly' [*pańskie*] (alongside a clerical, bourgeois, and firemen's one), presided over by a local notary; there operated a local branch of 'Sokół' youth sport movement and gymnastics organisation, whose works were stimulated by the notary and schoolmaster; a scout squad, a voluntary fire brigade, and an amateur orchestra; patriotic anniversaries were celebrated. Thus, all the elements of public life of Galicia's intelligentsia existed, which were known, only bigger in scale, to the larger hubs. The intelligentsia was becoming the animator of cultural, educational, and national actions even in the smallest towns and villages. The primary role was played in such venues by village teachers, among whom, some were engaged in literature and arts,

some wrote poems or theatrical plays, or historical articles, some of which – not a rare thing at all – gained quite a popularity.

The activity of the Galician intelligentsia was enabled, primarily, by the province's political autonomy and was therefore propelled by the habit of becoming involved in public initiatives – the custom and, also, the opportunity of taking action to the benefit of one's town, region, and country. This habit evolved in the hinterland hubs of the Russian Partition at a much later date, especially in small or very small towns to which a cultural tradition was alien, as they had no secondary-level schools, in the first place. Larger towns saw, over the entire period, a more or less secret social life of the local intelligentsia elites flourishing; similarly to Warsaw, the local intelligentsia endeavoured, everywhere, to take initiatives similar to those inaugurated by the frequenters of Dr Benni's Friday meetings in Warsaw – to the degree allowed by the means available and opportunities opened by the legal-and-political situation. The social life style 'in force' at the time in Warsaw was also copied, or reproduced, everywhere else – even though the network of local salons would have been replaced by one hospitable house of a leading representative of the local society. In larger centres, editorial boards of local Polish periodicals also formed the nuclei of intellectual life. Most *guberniya* towns had professional associations (medical societies, in most cases), along with charity and, with time, cultural and sports (usually, oarsmen's or cyclists') associations.

In the smaller towns of the Kingdom, the local landed gentry initiated all cultural activities, at first. One excellent example is Gustaw Zieliński: a poet and landowner from the settlement of Skępe, the founder of a voluminous library and of a research scholarship, he was a figure of importance not only for the locality of Skępe but also in the intellectual life of nearby Płock. From the 1870s onwards, the local intelligentsia milieus gathered and held their discussions at the fire-stations of the Volunteer Fire Brigades – aside from philanthropic associations, the only legal public organisation in the latter half of the century. Fire brigade departments consisted of representatives of the small-town intelligentsia and of other social strata. In the words of Bolesław Prus, a leading Positivist publicist of the time, educating citizens was as important for them as extinguishing fires; provincial fire brigades taught "the barristers' fraternity with artisans, merchants with day-labourers, tenement-house-owners with caretakers", they inculcated order and discipline in men, toughening their flesh and spirit.[16] For

16 Bolesław Prus, *Kronika tygodniowa* ['Weekly chronicle'], Kurier Warszawski, 1880, no. 35.

example, among the honorary members of the Fire Brigade of the *guberniya* town of Płock, established in 1874, there was 1 physician, 3 pharmacists, 1 surveyor, 7 office workers of various institutions, 1 member of the local committee of the Land Credit Society [*Towarzystwo Kredytowe Ziemskie*], plus 1 brickyard owner. Moreover, Brigade squads became the mainstay of their affiliated orchestras, amateur theatre ensembles or choral circles – and, largely, set the stage for an eruption of educational and cultural initiatives after 1905.

Ciechanów offers a good example of a linear development of this kind. This town had at the beginning of the 20th century some 9,000 inhabitants, including 5,000 Jews. Polish public life after the January Insurrection was initially limited to the custodial initiatives of Róża Krasińska, the owner of the local estate, and to secret education courses she and her daughters ran. A fire department – the site of the local intelligentsia – was finally set up in Ciechanów in 1882; 'Victoria' Choral Circle was established twenty years later. 1907 saw the appearance of a local Society for Polish Culture branch; a People's House was opened, and several social-economic associations emerged. Prior to the outbreak of World War One, Ciechanów boasted a few operational theatres, amateur ensembles, orchestras, choirs and libraries, a Cyclists' Circle, as well as three agricultural schools in the town's vicinity. To a remarkable extent, these activities were animated by a local medic named Franciszek Rajkowski.

Apart from Ciechanów, the music-loving town of Łowicz comes to mind – a specific marvel not just within the Kingdom himself, but by countrywide standards too: in this town, home to just above 10,000 dwellers, one could encounter as many as 127 grand pianos and other fortepianos or pianos (this being, on average, one instrument per just less than eighty locals); besides, the local organist set up a symphony orchestra, in the same year. A private historical museum was also set up in Łowicz.

A special place on the Polish cultural map of the late 19th/early 20th century was taken by those hubs whose attractive power many times surpassed their number of residents, and which periodically assembled prominent exponents of the intellectual elites. Nałęczów, in the Congress Kingdom, was one such town. With the widely-known baths centre established there in 1880, Nałęczów grew to become a popular venue for the Warsaw intelligentsia to meet. Apart from Karol Benni, the facility's owner, its habitués included Bolesław Prus and Stefan Żeromski, both of whom described or mentioned Nałęczów in their fiction works.

Krzeszowice and subsequently, Krynica – but first and foremost, Zakopane – played a similar role in Galicia. At the turn of and, especially, in the first years of the 20th century, Zakopane, an inconspicuous highland village, became the

main meeting venue for the Polish intelligentsia of Galicia, the Kingdom and the Eastern Borderlands; some of the visitors would come from the Poznań Province and Silesia too. An estimated 80% of visitors to Zakopane were of an intelligentsia background as of 1890. A fondness for mountain hiking, becoming the most fashionable form of summertime relaxation at the time, an outlook for picturesque landscapes and, on the other hand, the still-incurable pulmonary diseases, made outstanding Polish creative artists from various fields of activity attached to Zakopane, for shorter or longer periods. A cultural weekly was issued there; a reading room was available; open lectures, black-tie events, amateur theatrical spectacles and concerts were held there; the resort was home to numerous cultural and professional societies. First and foremost, however, this piedmont spa became the place for unrestrained contact among the intellectual elites of all Polish lands, not restricted by censorship; it was a supra-Partition 'centre of things Polish' of quite an importance, culturally as well as politically.

The actions taken by the Polish provincial intelligentsia in view of enhancing the civilisation of their towns and regions were accompanied by the solidification of the group's own unique identity, awareness of its purposes, dependencies, and threats. The intelligentsia of small hubs, relatively scarce in number and of limited means, was to a considerable extent dependent upon the local landed gentry and the parish; on the other hand, this community was particularly menaced by the possibility of becoming diluted into the petty bourgeoisie. Staying separated from these two poles constituted the major condition for these people's sense of distinctiveness.

At the same time, as already said, the intelligentsia shared the conviction of its specific tasks with respect to society and its mission as the propagator of education and civilisational progress. Resolution of this dilemma was one of the major intellectual challenges faced in the nineteenth century by the Polish 'enlightened stratum' – in the main centres of Polish thought as well as in smaller, languid towns. The examples quoted above prove that the challenge was sometimes successfully addressed. In parallel, throughout the period, the press, journalistic pieces and belles-lettres works resounded with poignant charges claiming that the mission was apparently being betrayed, on a daily basis. A usual thing in the history of this particular social class, the most ruthless criticism came from its ownrepresentatives:

> An intellectual snooze in the country becomes increasingly tormenting to those suffering from insomnia. Where are the strong people upon whom the entire future is founded, who ought to constitute the heart of social hearth? […] The flesh is creeping at reading a description of the gradual numbing of intelligent individuals in out-of-town areas. Those with their hearts warm and minds enterprising, who might have been a particle

of fire amongst the studying youth in the capital city, tend to fizzle out little-by-little a few years afterwards. Apparently, that fervour was but forcefully excited by the friendly conditions, rather than an inner strength. Initially, they fanatically made threats, fretted and fumed at dishonest, hideous local relations, and promised to *contribute a strong element of sound thought, views and action*. Subsequently, they stepped down, turning into activists, amongst, say, the preference-philistine ranks [a phrase coined to denote attachment to the card-game, named preference, and narrow-mindedness]. A small team of *thought workers* settled-down in the capital receives no assistance from the hinterland, as the latter unrelentingly intoxicates any symptom of reason and lucidity. *Prawda*, 1888, no. 9.

3. An artistic bohemia

At the end of the nineteenth century, an alternative to the numb 'preference-philistine' lifestyle pursued by the intelligentsia was proposed by artistic bohemians who openly criticised the existing conventionalities and proposed instead completely new codes of conduct, creative expression, wear, feasting, and ways of conceiving one's life. The first milieu to consciously propagate in Polish territories the new style of life and new artistic values – by means of words, images, and behaviour – was, in the 1880s, a group of contributors to *Wędrowiec* weekly, published in Warsaw. The team featured Antoni Sygietyński and Stanisław Witkiewicz, the most eminent art critics of the time (Witkiewicz was also a painter and a writer, who in the later years designed the so-called 'Zakopane' architectural style); the painters Aleksander Gierymski and Michał Elwiro Andriolli; Adolf Dygasiński, the novelist and short-story author; Artur Gruszecki, a journalist, and editor of *Wędrowiec* from 1884-7. The magazine propagated naturalism on Polish soil; their proposed artistic programme, well-thought-over by penmen and visual artists alike, envisioned that Warsaw should be shown through all the manifestations of the big city's life: its rich men and paupers, sisters of mercy and strumpets: "in a word, for Warsaw to be shown vivid, changeable, bustling, thrilling with a frantic temper, so lofty and sublime some time, and so shallow and coarse some other."[17]

The writers and painters that gathered around *Wędrowiec* struggled, in the first place, to remove the barriers blocking the development of Polish art: the embarrassing conviction about its ancillary society-oriented character, outdated forms of artistic patronage, deficiencies and a lack of artistic/creative freedom

17 Stanisław Witkiewicz, *Aleksander Gierymski*, in: *Pisma zebrane* ['Collected works'], vol. 2: *Monografie artystyczne* ['Artistic monographs'], Kraków 1974, p. 381.

among artists. The image of Witkiewicz's own and his friends' life in Warsaw in the eighties, coming down to us out of his memoirs, does testify to those people's 'frantic temper' and heralds the lifestyle of the Krakow bohemia at the century's turn.

The style under discussion, reflected in a number of novels, poems, cabaret pieces, murals and, years and years later, movies and popular television series, was most fully expressed in the Galicia of the Young Poland movement era, particularly in Krakow. The local artistic bohemia, gathered around Stanisław Przybyszewski, and then around Tadeusz 'Boy' Żeleński, drew plentifully upon the Viennese and Berlin patterns. The slogans, propagated by Modernism, to set art free from the bonds of traditional academism, and to release life from the fetters of convention and mendacity, particularly with regard to women, called for a new code of conduct, begot new milieus and means of communication, dictated the fashion trends of wear, furniture, and daily necessities. The Young-Poland movement of Krakow plotted on the city's map a network of literary cafés at which bohemians met, the most famous among them being Jan Michalik's 'Lwowska' Confectionery on Floriańska Street. The place, whose decor was co-created by its frequenters, ostentatiously provoking the public's traditional taste, was, in the years 1905-12, home to 'Zielony Balonik' ['The Green Balloon'] – the time's most important "cabaret of writers, journalists, and artists", of which more will be said later on.

Chapter 3: The development conditions of a national culture

1. The conditions of scientific and artistic work

Starting with the 1860s, the external circumstances informing the development of Polish science and culture were becoming remarkably different in the four provinces of a varied political status, into which the former Commonwealth territory had been divided (i.e. the Prussian Partition, Galicia – including Cieszyn (Teschen) Silesia, the Kingdom of Poland, and, Lithuania and Ruthenia – the so called Stolen Lands).

The most beneficial situation, as has been mentioned several times, was the case in the Austrian Partition, where political autonomy enabled an almost untrammelled development of national culture. It was in Galicia that the conditions favoured the development of sciences the most – with two Polish universities and a few other tertiary schooling institutions. Alongside those, the already-mentioned Mr. Baraniecki ran his Higher Courses for Women; in 1872, an Academy of Arts and Sciences (literally, 'Abilities') was established; numerous scholarly and artistic societies functioned; 'classics', i.e. Latin, secondary schools offered the top education standard, within the entire Polish territory. However, barriers to the development of sciences and culture were anchored in the overall condition of the Galician economy, shortages, low industrialisation, and a very traditional social structure. In Eastern Galicia and in Cieszyn Silesia, the Polish element had to enter into a rivalry against its Ukrainian and Czech counterparts, with the result that Polish culture developed in this area in an opposition to what its as-large, or larger, neighbours produced.

This latter factor was of an even greater importance with the Prussian Partition. The rights of Polish language and culture were subject there to systematic limitation, up to the point that Polish, and Polish things, were ousted from schools in the late 19th century. Polish scholarly and scientific institutions were the most poorly developed in this province. The student community of institutes such as the Higher School of Agriculture in Żabikowo, an ephemeral private facility established within August Cieszkowski's estate; represented their region to a negligible degree (with a mere twenty-two coming from Wielkopolska, out of 152 disciples in the course of seven terms). There was, moreover, a Society for Scientific Lectures, established in 1913 in Poznań, following the earlier models.

This gap was not to be filled by the Polish cultural-educational societies: the 'Karol Marcinkowski' Society for Youth Educational Assistance (funding scholarships to gifted boys); the Poznań Society of the Friends of Learning, pursuing a rather intensive publishing activity, but staying conservative, parochial, and self-secluded in its strictly national activities; the Pomeranian Society for Scholarly Assistance (established in 1848); and, the Scientific Society of Toruń (established in 1875).

Similar and even further-fetched restrictions and limitations affected Polish culture and science in the Kingdom; the Polish potential there was, however, definitely the largest, compared to the other provinces. It was there that Warsaw, the largest Polish metropolis, was located. Threats characteristic to those occurring on the peripheries of the spiritual homeland of Polish people were unknown to this area.

No Polish university in the Congress Kingdom, or in the Russian Partition overall, appeared ever since the Main School was liquidated. In Warsaw itself, the Imperial University of Warsaw operated; technological universities or colleges appeared at the turn of the 20th century; Puławy hosted its Institute of Rural Economics and Forestry. In spite of their existence, young scientists – in, virtually, all the areas of research – commonly faced no prospects for themselves. Thus, the decision to emigrate was a legitimate option: trips to Galician universities, and to those in the west of Europe, proliferated. Polish scholars joined scientific institutions across Europe, either maintaining their bonds with their native country, or breaking them.

For those who would not leave, scholarly or scientific work was more of a vocation than a profession. "Science was practised casually, the insufficiently-slept hours of the night and days of holiday relaxation being devoted to it", Władysław Smoleński, an outstanding historian and witness of the epoch, recollected. "One would give himself over to it unselfishly, without the prospect of any tangible benefit, the prevalent conviction being that a national service duty is being thus fulfilled."[18] The Warsaw learned intelligentsia made a living primarily from teaching at private educational facilities, tutelages, or from doing office jobs with institutions run by Polish managerial teams – such as the Land Credit Society, or railway companies. They would do their research at the expense of daily sacrifice, as reflected by Bolesław Prus, using a satirist's false mirror:

18 Władysław Smoleński, *Warunki pracy naukowej w byłym Królestwie Polskim w okresie odwetu rosyjskiego za powstanie styczniowe* ['The conditions of scholarly work in the former Kingdom of Poland, under Russian retaliation for the January Insurrection'], in: idem, *Studia historyczne* ['Historical studies'], Warszawa 1925, p. 285.

> I have asked my acquaintances to show me a typical learned Pole. And indeed, a maigre and pallid character was brought along to me, his eyes insane, his liver so enlarged that it protruded over his hip, wearing a threadbare overcoat and a pair of trousers torn off at the bottom. […] Verily, the local learned men resemble missionaries amongst savage peoples. It ought to be added, namely, that the society is also frowning upon them, as penniless Darwinists. In Warsaw, a Darwinist namely means a cutthroat.
> Bolesław Prus, *Kronika tygodniowa*, *Kurier Warszawski*, 1886, no. 358.

Over nearly forty years between the Main School closure (1869) and the establishment of the Warsaw Scientific Society (1907), the burden of supporting scholarly activities was taken over by society – specifically, better or worse organised groups, milieus of varied provenances, local or professional communities, families and individuals. The patronage of science and education reflected at that time in-country social relations, as well as the major ideological and generational changes that affected Polish society over those decades.

The year following the closure of the Main School, at the intersection of the milieus of the intelligentsia, bourgeoisie and landed gentry, the idea cropped up to establish a Museum of Industry and Agriculture, an institution whose influence on scientific life over the following decades was essential.

The pioneering role was led by Count Julian Łubieński, a landlord and an industrialist, and Mathias Bersohn, a banker, founders of a laboratory arranged in 1870 within the *Guberniya* Government edifice (L.M. Pac's Palace in Warsaw). Two years later, after Łubieński's death and Bersohn's departure to Vienna, the laboratory was closed by the authorities. Soon after, their initiative was taken up by a group of Warsaw industrialists and aristocrats – most importantly, Jan-Tadeusz Lubomirski, the most consistent advocate for bringing into being an institution that would represent the needs of industry and agriculture, and deal with scientific activity. Thus, a Museum of Industry and Agriculture was set up, in 1875; apart from its educational and popularisation function, it was expected to organise experimental and observational studies, scientific courses, exhibitions, and lectures. The Museum was supported by contributions paid by its founding committee members, including individual donators and institutions: aristocrats and landowners, Warsaw financiers and industrialists. From the 1890s onwards, the intelligentsia took a leading role in supporting the Museum: self-employed professionals (Karol Benni, Ignacy Chrzanowski, and others) along with institutions (just to recall, the J. Mianowski Fund). At Friday teas held at Dr Benni's house, the problems related to the Museum's functioning and funding were discussed on a regular basis.

The Józef Mianowski Fund was the most important institution of scientific patronage, and was, as such, initiated by the Warsaw intelligentsia of the Main School generation (for censorship reasons, a description like 'scientific society'

could not be used). The idea was originally put forward in 1879 by a group of former School lecturers and students. Their intent was to establish an institution providing scholarly assistance and enabling several other, earlier conceived, ideas to come true, such as the launch of a scientific publishing house and a physiographical museum, and to endow prizes for the best scholarly studies. The concept was also to honour Józef Mianowski, the former Chancellor of the Main School, a man that enjoyed common respect; he died in January 1879 in Italy. On 19th January 1879, a group of Main School professors and students set up a twelve-member executive committee featuring one professor and two former students from each of the School's departments. The committee compiled the bye-laws of the organisation to be formed, and endeavours to have it legalised were made; the goal was met more than two years later, in July 1881.

The Fund was meant to be led by a Committee which initially exclusively consisted of people associated with the Main School. In its first years, Tytus Chałubiński was the chairman and Stanisław Kronenberg, the deputy chairman. The authorities included representatives of various areas of knowledge, personages of significance to the history of Polish science and culture – for example: Piotr Chmielowski; Henryk Sienkiewicz; Konrad Dobrski, a doctor and an activist with the Warsaw Medical Society; Mścisław Godlewski, a lawyer and a journalist; Henryk Struve, a philosopher; Filip Sulimierski, a naturalist and a publicist; Jakub Natanson, a chemist. The initiators and patrons of this undertaking included Ignacy Baranowski, Bolesław Prus, Polish scholars dispersed to various hubs at home and elsewhere in Europe, industrialists, and the landed gentry. The Fund was supported with contributions from its members, or even from their whole families (as, for example, with the Natansons), and with donations from lesser donors – individuals and institutions alike (which amounted to almost 1,000 from 1881-1906), donations and legacies. In order to sit on the Fund's management board, it was prerequisite to hold a degree. Among the Committee's thirty-five members (till 1906), as many as thirty-two represented the intelligentsia, the remaining three were educated members of the bourgeoisie (Kronenberg, Jakub Natanson and Józef Natanson). These were, mainly, self-employed professionals, especially physicians and lawyers (nine each), outstanding scientists, animators of the magazine publishing movement. In the first two years, elected for the managerial team were professors and graduates of the Main School, which strict rule was first broken in 1893, as the historian Tadeusz Korzon joined the body. The Fund's auxiliary personnel (office workers, legal advisers) usually performed their functions on a community-service basis.

With T. Chałubiński as chairman, the Fund was predominantly active in a threefold manner. Firstly, it funded the publication of scholarly books

(particularly, handbooks): the series 'Mathematical-Physical Library' and 'Philosophical Library' were initiated in 1882 and 1885, respectively; historical sources were published; periodical publications were supported, from 1883. Secondly, the Fund endowed studies in foreign centres, subsidised studies in the home country and field trips. Lastly, it disbursed, on a small scale, allowances to scholars, teachers and writers in financial distress.

Between 1885 and 1906, the Fund's importance as a major source supporting Polish science in the Russian Partition was much strengthened – to the extent that the Fund has outright been described as a "ministry of Polish science under the bondage"[19]. The subsequent Committees' activity was less intensive, compared to the first in the sequence. Now, however, as an expert in the field says: "they constituted, to a considerable extent, a representation of the Polish scientific milieu, a kind of barometer responding to the milieu's postulates and opinions. Hence, the decisions for subventions to specific projects, save for very few exceptions, were made under recognition of the opinions of a larger group of academics and under their accepted criteria. At the end of the day, the beneficiaries of financial assistance – and thus, a sui generis science policy – were determined by the activity and creative inventiveness of the scholarly milieu and its opinions whose exponent the Committee was, to a lesser or larger degree."[20]

The Fund's main task in that period was to support scholarly research, by subsidising studies at foreign universities, founding laboratories and research ateliers across the country, funding domestic research in natural sciences, geology, anthropology and soil science, and disbursement of benefits. Supporting academic publications, usually inspired externally by a scientific milieu, was an equally important aspect; the criteria for the Fund for subventions were the publication's scholarly standard and the social demand. The projects so supported included *Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego* (a geographic dictionary of the Kingdom of Poland; from 1890), *Słownik języka polskiego* (a dictionary of Polish), *Poradnik dla samouków* (a guide for autodidacts), as well as encyclopaedic, joint-author and monographic publications; moreover, most scientific magazines were subsidised. By 1906, the Fund's financial assistance had enabled the publication of almost 400 items, in various fields. The Fund moreover offered grants to students, prizes for excelling scholarly works, and scholarships.

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19 Ludwik Krzywicki, *Wspomnienia* ['Memoirs'], vol. 2, Warszawa 1958, pp. 546-551.

20 Jan Piskurewicz, *Warszawskie instytucje społecznego mecenatu nauki w latach 1869-1906* ['Warsaw institutions of community patronage of science, 1869-1906'], Wrocław 1990, p. 114.

The scientific activity of the Museum of Industry and Agriculture and, especially, of the J. Mianowski Fund, has been evaluated diversely. The most optimistic opinions claim that these institutions enabled proactive scientific policy, replacing non-existent peer state bodies with a good result; in this view, the Fund is often recognised as a sort of 'academy of sciences' which formed a scientific culture on a nationwide scale. There are historians, however, that point out the relative deficiencies of science in the Warsaw hub and its backward status – not only compared to West-European centres but even with respect to places such as Krakow or Lwów, where Polish universities existed and political conditions enabled one to unrestrainedly pursue a variety of scientific initiatives, with the Academy of Arts and Sciences coming to the fore.

All the same, the Museum and the Fund did function and provided beneficial conditions for the patronage of sciences to become widespread in society, and for society's integration around the purposes these two institutions set for themselves. The histories of both testify to a development of the intelligentsia, and the influences involving the Warsaw milieu were reciprocal. The members and patrons represented the aristocracy, landed gentry and the bourgeoisie, but the Mianowski Fund always owed its existence mainly to a numerous representation of the intelligentsia, most of who resided in Warsaw; with years, this group's participation in providing for the Museum was growing. Jan Piskurewicz, the monographer of both institutions (already quoted), has aptly found that the emergence and subsequent evolution of the Fund and the Museum reflected, over several decades, "a process where responsibility for the development of Polish science was being taken over from the aristocracy and the landed gentry by the bourgeoisie – and especially, by the intelligentsia, which was growing number-wise and was increasingly aware of its specific role."[21]

Among Warsaw's scientific institutions there was yet another one which was a unique phenomenon not just within Polish territory. The secret Flying University will be covered at more length later on; let me just mention here that it was an ersatz of a tertiary school for women, as well as for male students normally attending the Russified Warsaw University.

2. Inter-Partition contacts

Apart from the social sponsorship and illegal courses, characteristic of Polish science in the late 19th and early 20th century, was contact between scientists and

21 Ibidem, p. 203.

scholars, regardless of the Partition of their residence. As already said, Galician universities offered reliance to students and professors from all Polish lands; the Krakow Academy of Arts and Sciences was composed of similar members. The sponsors of the period's major scientific institutions: the Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Mianowski Fund, or the Ossolineum in Lwów, consisted of the intelligentsia, the landed gentry and the bourgeoisie of all the provinces. Yet, Polish science was uniform in character – owing, in the first place, to ongoing contact between scientific and professional societies which regularly held their joint conventions aimed at mutual integration of their members, the exchange of experiences, and the celebration or commemoration of outstanding individuals in the areas of culture and science.

> The point is not about us spinning boisterous theories or systemates [*sic*] aimed at delighting the humanity; to discover great truths the human spirit may bring itself to conceive; the point is, instead, for us, dispersed as we are across the various parts and corners of this country, to be able to seek out this place and appear therein, regain the sense of our strength, vivacity and communication, which we have been deprived of by the century-long oppression of the relations hostile to us; in a word, for us to stand up under the banner of labour and love for the country, saying to ourselves: we are, and willing we are to be.
> Józef Dietl, President (Lord Mayor) of Krakow, welcome address to the attendees of 1st Convention of Polish Physicians and Naturalists, Krakow, 13th September 1869; quoted after: Jarosław Cabaj, *„Walczyć nauką za sprawę Ojczyzny". Zjazdy ponadzaborowe polskich środowisk narodowych i zawodowych jako czynnik integracji narodowej (1869-1914)* ['"Struggling through science for the Homeland's cause". Supra-Partition conventions of Polish national and professional milieus as a national integration factor, 1869-1914'], Siedlce, 2007, pp. 132-133.

The physicians' and naturalists' milieus organised their first all-Polish congress in 1869. In the course of the subsequent decades, before the War broke out, over sixty conventions were held, attended by theoreticians and practitioners, technologists and artists, representing various areas of science. Doctors specialising in a variety of fields, historians, lawyers and economists; penmen, journalists and musicians; technologists, miners and metallurgists; monument restorers and numismatists were all represented. Since the late 19th century, women held their own meetings. The conventions, sometimes simply called 'the mobile academia', were held, in their overwhelming majority, in Krakow and Lwów, the towns in the autonomy-enjoying province of Galicia. There, such events took advantage of the authorities' patronage (financial care included). Physicians, the most politically neutral professional group, would also meet in Warsaw or Poznań. Attendees of all such congresses came from the entire partitioned area of Poland,

as well as from the emigration. Foreign guests were invited as well: Czechs and Croatians visited Galicia on such occasions customarily, and their Polish colleagues returned their visits to Prague and Zagreb.

These conventions enabled, first of all, the transfer of scientific output regardless of the Partition boundaries. This transfer, as did the professional, social and family ties between the Polish intellectual elites, as highlighted earlier on, had a major bearing on Polish culture staying unified during the Partition era. These conventions provided opportunities for entering into social or friendly contact between the intelligentsia members of various professions. At last, they offered an opportunity to go and see the native country's provinces behind the cordon. Visits to Galicia were of special importance, enabling one to visit and explore the most important monuments of the royal city of Krakow, and offering contact with the climate of unrestrained Polishness prevailing there. Conventions held in Galicia were embedded within a whole system of accompanying events: exhibitions, visits to the theatre, sightseeing and study tours of the city's vicinity. The Polish language resounded around everywhere, Polish emblems, the words and phrases uttered by the actors on stage not infrequently proved even more profitable than the scientific benefits drawn from the papers or reports delivered and listened to at the convention. Speakers and lecturers from behind the cordon would take with themselves from Krakow not only conference materials but also apparently-trifling national relics or mementos. A historian from Livonia who found a bill-of-fare distributed at a party in Sukiennice (the Cloth Hall), printed in Polish and adorned with a Jan Długosz bust, "so enjoyably visually striking" that he saved it for himself sacredly, smuggled it through the frontier, and inserted it in his memorial album.

3. Knowledge and talents leaking out

The so-called emigration of talent was yet another aspect proving vital to the developmental potential of Polish culture and science in the latter half of the 19th and at the beginning of 20th century. The entire period under discussion saw Polish society, living in its native territory, being drained via several 'channels' used by whole groups of varying social status, leaving their country for various reasons and pursuing different purposes. In terms of numbers, the economic migration to various countries in Western Europe, the United States, or Brazil, was, plainly enough, the largest. With time, this trend was sucking out increasing numbers of indigent people, especially the rural population, Poles, Jews and Ukrainians alike, from all three Partition provinces. This phenomenon, quite important in many respects, and vividly commented on since the late 19th century, is actually

outside the thematic scope of this book. This outflow occurred in a variety of ways, though, extending to people of advanced national awareness, the educated, and those active in the country's political and intellectual life. Recalled in this context should be, in the first place, the mortal victims of the uprisings and of the ensuing repression waves (most severely, after the January Insurrection), used by the partitioner's authorities as a means of eliminating the most zealous national activists. Mass deportations were part of this same story, resulting in very large groups of Poles, mostly (though not only) from the Russian Partition, landing in Siberia, the Caucasus, or further into inland Russia, to stay there for many years – if they were ever to return at all. The grand wave of exile after the January Insurrection's defeat was followed, in the late 19th century and later on, by similar measures being applied to independence plotters, especially, activists with radical socialist formations. As estimated by researchers in the area of deportations from Polish territory, after the sentence was served, the chance to leave exile and return remained open to some 60 per cent of convicts only.

The deportations were complemented by political emigration – a phenomenon occurring during the entire Partition period, intensifying at the moments the exiles intensified: following the November and January uprisings, and in the late 19th/early 20th century. The role of deportations and political emigration for Polish society under the Partitions – particularly, the Russian one – is not to be overestimated: firstly, due to these phenomena's mass character; secondly and, seemingly, more importantly, the distinctively active individuals were thereby eliminated from political and intellectual life. This generally affected young people being of value from the standpoint of the nation's intellectual potential.

In the latter half of the 19th century other 'channels' through which educated Poles were flowing out from their native country gained much in importance, and these should be of our special interest here. Polish scientists namely migrated, in search of research facilities for themselves, to scientific institutions in Western Europe; young Poles with a professional background (mainly, in technology) travelled to the West, especially beyond Europe, to look for a job; artists migrated and settled elsewhere for good. In terms of numbers, trips into Russia's hinterland in search of jobs and careers was the severest occurrence in this context. This latter migration direction appeared within the Russian Partition only, primarily, in its Lithuanian and Ruthenian *guberniya*s, which saw the highest numbers of residents leaving their abodes due to the scarcity of opportunities to fulfil their potential. One has to be bear in mind that during the five decades before World War One broke out, the Polish historical tradition and patriotic code were codified and constructed, and a modern society was built – one that redefined the scope of national obligations and made use, in its relations with its neighbours,

of a qualitatively newly-shaped patriotism. Redefined was also the concept of national treason, which had its new limits determined. Given these circumstances, voluntary emigration from the homeland naturally triggered a discussion on the moral facet and admissible limits of such an 'emigration of talent'.

In the latter half of the 19th century, the concept of voluntary exile, perceived in terms of neglected obligations, desertion, if not treason, increasingly gained in importance. The issue was considered at that time in its several aspects, trying to define excuses and incomparable burdens of guilt. Seeking a livelihood outside the country was classified in its own genus: a bitter, virtually dramatic, vagrancy of simple people, doomed in their home country to dealing with shortages, or indigence. Those who impoverished their own community, or society, by carrying their properties, energy, or talent away were estimated along different terms. A still different opinion was instigated by trips into the Russian Empire.

Throughout the period in question, voices condemning any (e)migration, in the name of duties and obligations owed to the Homeland, were not isolated at all. "Emigration is, in substance, a misdemeanour: an act it is of desertion from the [battle]field – and only in a unique case may it become a necessity": so wrote Józef-Ignacy Kraszewski in 1872, himself in a forced exile, in Saxony. "Regardless of the instance, it is an escape, an act of recognising oneself as a defeated person, impotent and cowardly".[22] Emigration was regarded as, at least, a morally ambiguous act and a misfortune for Poland by representatives of all the ideological and political options. Eliza Orzeszkowa, whose opinions were the most extreme, condemned not only the trips to Western Europe and over the Pond, but even abandonment of the Stolen Lands for Krakow or Warsaw. As for herself, she persisted in Grodno, then a provincial town located beyond the Kingdom's eastern border; as she explained in an 1895 private letter, "my intent was not to leave the lost outpost, or to bring anybody down from it. I have always been inimical to emigrating from sadder into more joyous countries".[23] The denationalising influence of foreign lands was emphasised over and over again, particularly with respect to simple people and the youth. There were conservative or Catholic commentators who argued that studying at West-European universities might appear pernicious to young minds – particularly when it came to Zurich, an apparently Jewish-controlled hub.

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22 Józef-Ignacy Kraszewski, *Program Polski 1872. Myśli o zadaniu narodowym* ['A programme for Poland, 1872. Some thoughts on the national objective'], Poznań 1872, pp. 43-44.

23 Letter to Leopold Méyet, 12th March 1895; in: Eliza Orzeszkowa, *Listy zebrane* ['Collected letters'], ed. by E. Jankowski, vol. 2, Wrocław 1955, p. 66.

The 'emigration of skills', or abilities, was no less rampantly criticised: the homeland being expropriated of the talents, ambitions, and labour of its people who were not forced to leave due to financial standing or fear of persecution. Young, talented and enterprising people, Orzeszkowa remarked, outraged, "are harvesting in remote cornfields, pleased with their quarry; here, it is becoming emptier and emptier, duller and duller, for if there is anyone quitting, to remain or settle down, he would only be a dull man. Whenever, instead, he is, or represents himself to be, more vivid a person, he then goes to prey in lands remote."[24]

Clearly, not every instance of leaving for 'parts remote' was subject to such an uncompromising assessment. The situation of Polish science in that time forced a number of local researchers to leave. Such departures were seen as a natural must-do, although they sometimes had to do with bitterness toward the impossibility to fulfil one's professional potential in the home country. A relevant afterthought is to be found, for instance, in the diary of Józef Nusbaum-Hilarowicz, an eminent zoologist: finding it difficult to maintain a specialist workshop in Warsaw, he eventually had to move, in 1890, not really abroad, but just to a Lwów higher school. The departure for France of Maria Skłodowska, the most outstanding Polish scientist at the century's turn (better known afterwards as Marie Curie), was explained in the very same manner. Working with a Western scientific institution opened prospects to Polish scholars, offering them exploration tools they would have never been able to obtain at home. There was, moreover, yet another positive aspect – as highlighted, for example, by Wincenty Lutosławski, the once-well-known philosopher: the researcher's achievements could be presented "before the world-wide intellectual elite", whilst, at the same time, an opportunity "for the learned man to refresh his mind" appeared, "thereby contributing fresher ideas to his native country" which was peripheral against the European centres, enclosed within its Partition-imposed limits, and deprived of a possibility to normally develop science-wise. This is how scholars, or scientists, were turning into the indispensable "lungs of the country"[25] – and thus Lutosławski explained his own very frequent travels.

Similar categories were applied to the consideration of the activities of Polish artists abroad; criticism extending to them was voiced only when they were regarded as competitive against their peers residing at home. The most notorious

24 Letter to Jan Karłowicz, 17th January 1895; in: E. Orzeszkowa, *Listy zebrane*, vol. 3, Wrocław 1956, p. 108.

25 Wincenty Lutosławski, *Jeden łatwy żywot* ['One easy life'], Warszawa 1933, p. 244.

such incident was the erection, in 1898, of the Adam Mickiewicz Monument in Warsaw, the result of endeavours of some of the leading exponents of the Warsaw elite, among whom Karol Benni, Dionizy Henkiel and Henryk Sienkiewicz took the lead. Following Sienkiewicz's suggestion, the Monument committee entrusted the design to Cyprian Godebski[26], a Polish sculptor, born and active in France; the decision discontented the Polish milieu, although the design was welcomed by art critics.

The foreign activities of Polish engineers, naturalists, and geographers, numerous and not infrequently pursuing their careers in very distant and exotic countries, call for special attention. Ernest Malinowski was probably the most famous among those explorers and adventurers. With his many years in Peru and Ecuador, he developed the Transandine Railway, and was a Dean with the University of Lima, Peru. His achievements in South America were often proudly commented on by the Polish press; one journalist's magniloquent opinion had it that Peru owed the memorable work to Malinowski, who immortally inscribed "on the peaks of the Andes, with arches of steel and locomotive sparkles" his own name and the name of his fatherland.[27] Let us make it clear, though, that although his greatest achievements appeared in the latter half of the 19th century, Malinowski had been forced to leave Poland after the November Insurrection. So was the fate of, for instance, Ignacy Domeyko, the geologist of outstanding merit in Chile; he took part in the said Insurrection as a teenage boy.

Accolades were also received by other Poles working far away from their home country: Stanisław Janicki, was a member of the Suez Canal construction team, and the man to whom the Moskva River owes its modern regulation; Stanisław Kierbedź, was the designer of a bridge on the Neva River in Petersburg; Bronisław Rymkiewicz, was a maker of railroads and ports in Brazil; Edward Habich, Władysław Kluger and Ksawery Wakulski, were engineers working in Peru; Polish doctors and engineers were hired for projects in the Balkans and in Romania; naturalists, ethnographers and geographers: Paweł-Edmund Strzelecki in Australia, Konstanty Jelski in Peru, Stefan Szolc-Rogoziński in Cameroon, Jan Kubary and, later, Bronisław Malinowski in Oceania, and many others. There was a considerable group of Poles – just to mention them here – who, originally sent to exile, switched to exploring the nature and the peoples dwelling in Siberia. Those who excelled among them: Benedykt Dybowski, Wacław

26 Not to be confused with his namesake grandson, a military-man and fiction author.

27 Sygurd Wiśniowski, *Kolej żelazna w obłokach* ['A railroad amidst the clouds'], *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, 1877, no. 97.

Sieroszewski, or Bronisław Piłsudski, provided the foundations for the scholarly description of the Russian Empire's Far East.

The explorers and researchers named above belonged to a few generations, and their migration paths were different: some of them were post-November (Domeyko, Strzelecki, Malinowski) or post-January emigrants (Kubary); others made a voluntary decision to emigrate. None of them was ever charged with having neglected Polish national interests due to working abroad; on the contrary, it was emphasised that each of them had gained – "*par sa science et son travail*" (as Ernest Malinowski's French obituary claimed) – high esteem in their country of employment, contributing to render Poland universally famous.

The merits that Polish people had gained for the development of science and technology in exotic states, situated on the outskirts of civilisation, were most willingly emphasised. Not only jobs or posts, but, in the first place, opportunities to deliver their ideas, in an almost pathless terrain, was what they had attained. A Polish engineer, geographer, ethnologist, or physician could at last prove how qualified he was – which was all too often called into question or, sadly, unnoticed, especially in his native country, or in Western Europe. The practical experience gained beyond the seas could be, and indeed often was, taken advantage of in view of the mother country's good.

Doing a work abroad was recognised as an extension of the mission pursued locally by other Polish scientists – or, by the Polish intelligentsia at large. The dogma advocating doing service to the nation and to society was an integral part of the nineteenth-century Polish intelligentsia's ethos, which was particularly true for the progressive intelligentsia of the Kingdom of Poland. Warsaw-born engineer Stanisław Janicki was explicitly named as the heir to this tradition. The projects he delivered in Egypt, Rijeka (Fiume) and Russia proved his will to serve one's neighbour, instilled in him in his youth: in his Warsaw years, he was brought up to live not for himself but "for a larger family, for the society, and humankind"[28]. The family and environmental background was also highlighted for another native of Warsaw, engineer Stanisław Kierbedź. The biographies of engineers – substantially, practical people – who won renown outside the borders of Poland willingly highlighted the events and characteristics which could have been part of, without retouch, the romantic biographies of the national heroes. Courage in conceiving and delivering plans, briskness, consistency and determination displayed in the face of hardships were their most frequently enumerated strong points. Also, the kindness of those Poles toward the others,

28 [W.K.], *Stanisław Janicki*, *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, 1888, no. 290.

regardless of their nation, was emphasised, in most cases, wining them respect among the aliens. Englishmen are reported to have admitted that Ernest Malinowski was 'a perfect gentleman'; Janicki, Kierbedź and Kluger were ascribed similar characteristics. Janicki, the man, was described in a mode more typical to biographies of saint visionaries or demigods rather than representatives of mundane technological professions: "Weather-beaten with the Egyptian sun, almost without a droplet of blood on his face, his sight glowing with the light of Sirius". Such incoherent, emotion-imbued descriptions could be referred, almost unadjusted, to the leading personages of the Polish Romanticist pantheon.

Exponents of the humanities, or the arts, especially if involving the use of one's native language, could not count on such forbearance. Instances of rejection of Polish, in professions obligated to cherish the language and Polish things, were invariably stigmatised. Thus, Maria Deryng, an outstanding drama artist, and a leading actress of the Warsaw stage, next to Helena Modrzejewska, incurred voices of condemnation. Having married, in 1883, Bogumił Colonna-Walewski, a lawyer, she quit her theatrical career and followed her husband to inland Russia. "The saddest thing was", memorialist Jadwiga Ostromęcka wrote, "that Mrs. Walewska, who cultivated our beautiful language on the Warsaw stage for a number of years, became Russified with time, it is reported, influenced by her careerist husband, and spoke Russian to her children". Penmen who quit the mother tongue to offer their writing services to aliens, especially to the invaders, easily entailed the charge of national treason. Although dating to an earlier period, a model example was that of Jan-Tadeusz Bułharyn, a Russian-language writer from the early 19th century, who had ostentatiously repudiated his Polish bloodline, which won him the concordant opinion that he was a recreant ex-Pole among his contemporaries and descendants.

The most notorious case in point, as far as the 'emigration of skills' is concerned, the one that caused much dispute among Poles at the turn of the century, was Joseph Conrad, born Józef-Teodor-Konrad Korzeniowski. His career as an author in England triggered a stormy debate in his mother country around the question of whether it was the done thing for a Pole to give his or her talent away to foreign literature, instead of writing in Polish; and, whether an international fame should release Polish artists from the obligation to put his or her aptitudes at the homeland's service. For Wincenty Lutosławski, Conrad's story reinforced the moral and practical reasons for emigrating when the situation in the home country prevented an outstanding individual from appropriately delivering his or her talents; the resonance of a Polish name abroad would then yield more benefits than the abilities wasted 'on-site'. Responding to Lutosławski's article, published in the Petersburg magazine *Kraj*, Eliza Orzeszkowa voiced her exponential

critique in the same periodical, unreservedly denouncing any such departures and, primarily, any attempts at explaining them with reasons other than a sheer thirst for financial gain.

"The gentleman who happens to write widely-read and exquisitely-profitable novels in English", sneered she, "has nearly incurred me an attack of nerves. Whilst reading about him, I could feel some scabrous and unsavoury thing, of a sort, churning and creeping up in me." Quite typically, this authoress considered a "creative ability" to be the nation's utmost treasure; depriving the nation of it was, apparently, sheer vileness ("how could one even think about it – without shame!", even though the culprit could make up the most elevated excuses for himself.[29]

Trips to inland Russia in search of property, work, or land to own, was another similarly controversial issue. In the course of the period in question, the conviction prevailed that Polish people had a civilisational mission to deliver with respect not only to Siberia but, in fact, to the entire Russian state. The thus-defined role of exiles and settlers was advocated by numerous publicists, mostly those from the Stolen Lands, or those whose individual histories bounded them with the Empire's eastern boundaries. On the other hand, however, close contact with Russia was at times seen as a natural, and necessary, consequence of the existing conditions. "However unwelcome to us the relations with the depth of Russia may be", J.I. Kraszewski admitted – to quote yet another of his comments, arguably representative of the attitude – "doing work therein, the apostolate of education and civilisation, are also part of our calling. This is nothing of a Wallenrodism[*], let us repeat, and no Polish machination: it is the condition for life…".

However, opinions were often voiced whereby careers pursued further inside Russia implied growing into the Russian environment, religious conversion and, ultimately, complete de-Polonisation. Political exiles were affected too, albeit this particular group tended to emphasise their national identity and defend their distinctive character. Yet, with those convicts who decided to stay in Siberia, having served their sentence, the second and third generation of their descendants were usually Russified. "There is a lot of such families, *sybirak*-ised[*] and Orthodox", exile and memoirist Konstanty Borowski admitted reluctantly. But recruits and officials who arrived in the lands beyond the Urals out of their own free will were even more severely affected:

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29 Eliza Orzeszkowa, *Emigracja zdolności* ['Abilities emigrating'], *Kraj*, 1899, no. 16. For opinions on J. Conrad, cf.: *Conrad wśród swoich. Dokumenty. Wspomnienia* ['Conrad among his compatriots. Documents and recollections'], ed. by Z. Najder, Warszawa 1996.

> Not much can be said of those careerists. Those are, for most part, people who carry the fatherland with themselves at their soles, and who would go serve Mephistopheles in hell for a reward. Those gentlemen have no respect for the national opinion, speaking of it with contempt; they name the national needs and views superstitions, while themselves, once dressed in a cosmopolitan tabard, turn into Muscovites, in most cases. Agaton Giller, *Opisanie Zabajkalskiej Krainy w Syberii* ['A description of the *Zabaykalsky* land in Siberia'], 3 vols., Leipzig 1867, vol. 1; quoted after: Jerzy Fiećko, *Rosja, Polska i misja zesłańców. Syberyjska twórczość Agatona Gillera* ['Russia, Poland, and the exiles' mission. Agaton Giller's Siberian creative output'], Poznań 1997, p. 224.

Jadwiga Ostromęcka, who had landed in Siberia with her exiled parents when aged eighteen months old, and lived for many years in Kazan afterwards, had numerous opportunities to see and meet Poles "lost amidst the primeval-forests of the East, or, forced to dwell in wretched county one-horse towns cut-off from the world, where their sense of their own nationality tends to repeatedly vanish". She was abhorred the most by educated and nowise poor people who looked for profit and career opportunities inside Russia. The very decision to settle down in central Russia entailed the threat of denationalisation. Reproaching Włodzimierz Spasowicz, an eminent Polish activist residing in Petersburg, for his exhaustion and despondency about the strength of Polishness, publicist Ignacy Grabowski stated: "You do not dwell in a foreign country with impunity"[30].

However, trips into Russia implied a negative impact not just on individuals: Polish society as a whole also incurred a detriment. The tendency in question, incrementing gradually after the January Insurrection, occurred with time to be particularly menacing to the welfare, or even, simply, to the physical existence of Polish people in the former Commonwealth's eastern territory. Eliza Orzeszkowa highlighted, from her Grodno 'outpost', the pernicious consequences of the outflow of the Polish youth eastwards – in her novel *Australczyk*, of 1896, and in her (censored) press utterances and private letters. From the 1870s onwards, she observed in Lithuania a progressing fall of Polishness, caused by the Insurrection 'bloodletting', deep dejection and apathy, and, the offices being taken by Russians. But the habit of sending Polish children to Russian universities was, to her mind, incomparably more dangerous: there, they would undergo cosmopolitan influences and take over socialist ideas. The greatest breach was caused by the "grand exodus of youth to the East, to win bread sometimes, to make a career in most cases". Those who left would then put down roots in purely Russian

30 Ignacy Grabowski, *Patologia niewoli. II. Rezygnacja* ['The pathology of bondage. II. Relinquishment'], *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, 1909, no. 8.

environments and, even if not completely denationalised, became irretrievably lost to their homeland.[31]

> In my opinion, there is no more important a question for us right now than forestalling the emigrations of young people, than a devisal of the means of retaining them on the ground. […] Be it flat, be it uncomfortable, but, at the place they belong: so should go the watchword of any youngster entering the world. I am, virtually, a fanatic adherent of this idea. […] How woeful is it that one cannot possibly write about this under censorship.
> Eliza Orzeszkowa, in a letter to K. Poniatowski, 24th September 1892; in: Eliza Orzeszkowa, *Listy zebrane* ['Collected letters'], vol. 7, Wrocław 1971, p. 234.

Eliza's enunciations ten years later resounded with a stronger undertone of despondency and sense of impotency: "[…] I am pierced with a peculiar pain at seeing these powers of mind and heart that are departing to pay service to aliens. It is, as it were, blood running from the nation's veins."[32] She polemicised on this point with Lutosławski, who, in an article published in the nineties in *Kraj*, supported the idea of going to gain employment in Russia, as a fast-money-making opportunity open to young, educated and enterprising Poles. Jadwiga Ostromęcka, the keen observer of the vicissitudes of Polish people in Russia, considered Lutosławski's appeal as condemning "the weaker individuals to complete perdition of the national traits, those persisting in their ideals facing a torment of some split existence, which has been sadly-wittily named a *fermentation within a closed space*. Where are, in any case, the examples of great fortunes the professor advises to amass in the East? Is this to say that Poland should be revived through the amassing of tangible goods? Has organic work attained this? At such encouragement of exile to the East, where it is easier to lose your soul than accumulate capital, I was overwhelmed by an unpalatable and depressing astonishment."[33]

The numerous trips to Russia endangered the Kingdom's material and spiritual resources – a fact that was primarily recognised by national democrats such as Roman Dmowski or Zdzisław Dębicki, the latter deeming the shrinkage of the intelligentsia a particularly dangerous thing, "its absenteeism which is extending and, thus, detrimental to the country, concluded in so many cases with a

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31 Letter to Aureli Drogoszewski, 16th/28th April 1903; in: Eliza Orzeszkowa, *Listy zebrane* ['Collected letters'], vol. 3, p. 128.

32 Letter to Konstanty Skirmuntt, 17th April 1902; in: ibidem, vol. 9, Wrocław 1981, p. 263.

33 Jadwiga Ostromęcka, *Pamiętnik z lat 1862-1911* ['Memoirs, 1862-1911'], ed. by Anna Brus, Warszawa 2004, p. 112.

complete depaysation [*sic*; i.e. displacement, statelessness], if not Russification, of the family by means of getting married to a Russian woman". In the early years of the 20th century, *Sybir* (Siberia), once a 'land of shackles', was turning into a country of careers and prosperity; yet, the wealth this venue could offer might have proved beneficial to individuals: from the standpoint of the Polish nation, the prospect was illusory.[34]

> The organic work programme and the futile career-chasing, in the meanest sense of the word, […] have pushed whole legions of our youth graduating from tertiary scientific institutions eastwards, to areas so remote that many of them have stopped as far as the Pacific Ocean shore and Central-Asian [mountain] chains, […] in order to work for a society that is alien and, indeed, hostile to us. Do read the lists of Russian engineers, doctors, law-court officials, teachers, or even men-of-letters or journalists – and see for yourselves how many Polish names you can find there.
> [Roman Dmowski], *Po manifestacji 17 kwietnia* ['The demonstration of 17th April over'], series 'Z dzisiejszej doby' no. 10, Lwów 1894, pp. 13-15.

I have now quoted a number of various opinions deeming the 'emigration of skills/abilities' to be a deviation from the rigidly approached obligations of the Pole – or, conversely, a rare opportunity to extol Poland and make its name famous worldwide. It can be found that a severer evaluation was applied to those for whom the Polish language was the workspace, and who rejected their mother tongue in favour of another. The supranational nature of the language of mathematics, technology, or medicine removed such an entrapment from engineers, technologists, or doctors working in foreign countries. Still, the fundamental borderline was set elsewhere: condemnation or respect was earned by the migrants' attitude to their remote home country, their broken or maintained contact with their compatriots. Virtually all the most outstanding Polish nineteenth-century poets wrote their works as émigrés – to name Mickiewicz, Słowacki and Krasiński in the first place; they would, however, always write in Polish, for and about their Polish readers. Charles Edmond (born Edmund Chojecki) wrote novels in French, took an active part in the literary life of Paris and assumed French citizenship, but he also wrote in Polish almost till the end of his days, and took part in the patriotic celebrations of the Polish diaspora in Paris. Joseph Conrad, the man who virtually severed all the bonds linking him with his mother country, aroused ambiguous sentiments among Poles, for a change: the national pride of a compatriot's career in an English-language literary marketplace coincided with

34 Zdzisław Dębicki, *Kryzys inteligencji polskiej* ['The crisis of the Polish intelligentsia'], Warszawa 1918, p. 51.

an abomination due to such a complete breakaway with the land of his birth. Careerists and arrivistes abnegating their own nationality and ancestors in view of profit came across contempt and distaste.

There were careers in Russia, as impersonated by Tobolsk Governor Aleksander Despot-Zenowicz, or eminent economic activist Andrzej Wierzbicki, that implied no condemnation at all: "like the Star of Bethlehem", their attachment to Polish things, their pride in their native tradition, language and religion, and their readiness to extend care to their fellow countrymen have always actuated them.[35] Maria Deryng was damned for having left for Russia and her abjuration of the Polish language, whilst Helena Modrzejewska, another illustrious actress and Maria's contemporary, speaking English from American stages, gained for herself the position of a sort of national heroine for her resolute emphasising of her nationality and her intensive contact with her compatriots.

With respect to virtually all Polish engineers and scholars working abroad, their willingness to maintain their relations with the home country, benevolence toward their compatriots and merits for Poland were highlighted, as a rule. "The characteristic trait of the late Mr. Kierbedź", an obituary claimed (published in 1899 by *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* weekly) "is primarily the love and devout care with which he encompassed the [Polish] youth studying in Petersburg". He made a name for himself because of his professional achievements in the Russian capital in the mid-19th century; from a Polish standpoint, no less of a merit was the fact that his Petersburg home was "a rallying point for the Polish entourage and intelligentsia"; also, that Kierbedź had constructed a bridge in Warsaw which for decades was deemed one of the most modern in Europe; and, that in his last will, he bequeathed his technological library to the Lwów University of Technology. (His daughter Eugenia, married to her father's nephew, an engineer himself, donated in 1914 an edifice in Warsaw to the Public Library then being organised.)

Konstanty Jelski and Władysław Kluger provided Polish scientific institutions with collections of natural and ethnographic items acquired in Peru. Wherever he happened to work, Stanisław Janicki supported financially his fellow countrymen seeking help. Domeyko and Malinowski willingly surrounded themselves with Polish people; Malinowski enabled many of them a career in Peru, recommending to the Peruvian government quite a number of his younger colleagues. Polish commentators perceived this as a merit comparable with, if not equal to, the construction of the Transandine Railway.

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35 [S.A.], *Aleksander Despot-Zenowicz, b. gubernator tobolski* ['A.D.Z., former Governor of Tobolsk'], Lwów 1893, p. 11.

Chapter 4: The ideological debates of the 2nd half of the 19th century

The experience of the downfall of the January Insurrection was one of the thresholds in the history of the Polish nation, and especially, for its intellectual elites. For them, the trauma of 1863 proved almost paralysing. A considerable amount of formulations, a number of thought-out programmes, many reasonable warnings and even more dispassionate and common sense recommendations have been developed upon the foundation of this experience. Nonetheless, this very experience, penetrating into the depths of the sensitivities of those individuals and embracing at least one whole generation, essentially boiled down to one crucial, and painfully concrete, question: how can a small nation, which had most recently been made acutely aware of its littleness, venture in order to physically survive, and to preserve its little individual identity? Is this identity preservable in the face of the actions taken by the efficient state apparatuses of the partitioning powers? Will it really pay off to retain it, at the expense of the repressive measures descending upon the Polish people as Russia delivered its retort in response for the January Insurrection?

Neither the Partition experience nor the lessons learned from the failed upsurges in search of the country's independence in the former half of the nineteenth century could have prepared the Polish intelligentsia for this blistering question. What testifies best to the dimensions of this trauma and the sense of this strength is the fact that those who had had the severest experience of it spoke the most loudly about the defeat. One of them was Aleksander Głowacki (Bolesław Prus, 1847-1912): at the age of sixteen, he nearly became one of the (nameless) victims of the uprising; having had a scrape with death, he was unable to forget over his entire later life what the reveries of fiery teenage minds may bring about. The other was Eliza Orzeszkowa, née Pawłowska (1841-1910): the experience of her youthful years included an encounter with Romuald Traugutt, a marriage with a much older man, forcibly arranged by her family, and her decision not to accompany this unloved husband in exile; then, her endeavours, extending over several decades, to transgress the traditional image of woman: a hostage of convention, a priestess of the hearth, a submissive sacrifice. Another one was Piotr Chmielowski (1848-1904), who observed the heroism, triviality, and misery of Warsaw during the uprising from the viewpoint of a lower-secondary-school

student. Later on, he desperately strove to maintain his personal dignity in that same city, to avoid backsliding his own and his milieu's intentions, whilst having to feed his family, taking to various doings – from private tutorials, through to editing scientific periodicals or lecturing with the Flying University. Another one was Aleksander Świętochowski, the clearest-sighted but least-liked critic of the traditional Polish mentality, and the youngest among them (1849-1938): his lot was to come across the uprising nightmare in the charming setting of Kazimierz-Dolny upon the Vistula. Or, the oldest among them, Włodzimierz Spasowicz (1829-1906), of a Greek-Catholic, petty-nobility descent, who resigned from his law professorship in Petersburg in protest against the suppression of the student riots by the authorities. Later on, he turned into a consistent conciliation advocate, an invariably logical critic of daydreams and illusions, and a propagator of the idea of Polish cultural autonomy within the Russian Empire.

> I could hear, one day, a measured patter of some passage near our house. Through the window, I saw a horrid sight: amidst a Russian army company, a young man walked, faltering, and in that very moment a soldier hit him with the rifle butt on the face, out of which a spurt of blood sprayed. I was told it was the insurgent taken off in Solec, and his name was Frankowski. He was hanged in front of the [Crown] Tribunal in Lublin. Sixty-six years after, that harrowing image is sticking, vivid, in my memory.
> Aleksander Świętochowski, *Pamiętnik* ['Diary']; quoted after: Maria Brykalska, *Aleksander Świętochowski. Biografia* ['A.S.: a biography'], vol. 1, Warszawa 1987, pp. 11-12.

The brutality of the question history posed to all those people – or, of the question they grew markedly aware of – meant that the replies given to it were often obscure, unconvincing, and not infrequently inconsistent. And yet all those people not only made efforts to rationalise the reality they had come to live in, but also to build a positive programme, a scenario for exiting the obscurity and becoming future-oriented – in defiance of the conditions, often in spite of themselves, and, of the startling images of the defeat they found unforgettable.

1. The Galician milieus: the birth of the *Stańczyk* faction and the Krakow historical school. The Democrats and Positivists of Krakow

Although Galicia was not the scene of insurgent battles during 1863-4, the local rivalry of Polish political factions of the Insurrection period, using fair means or foul, and the Austrian and Prussian repression against the uprising's participants caused that the experience of 1863-4 became almost as important to the Habsburg subjects as it was for those living under the Romanovs. Galicians fought and were killed on the Insurrection battlefields, were detained in Austrian prisons or

deported into the depths of the Russian Empire (some 2,000 Habsburg subjects caught behind the cordon were dispatched to Siberia, including ca. 15 per cent of those performing jobs typical to the intelligentsia), and watched the defeat from behind the frontier poles. And, it was in the Austrian Partition that voices of damnation of armed fighting were first heard, along with claims for a revaluation of the romanticist programme of Polish irredentism.

The uprising fighting still went on when Paweł Popiel, an ideologist of merit and a conservative politician, called for a thorough condemnation of the uprising, recognition of the insurgents' military and political disaster, and that conclusions for the future be drawn on this basis. For the Polish element not to be destroyed after the Insurrection, it had to develop by a peaceful method, under the conditions dictated by the partitioners whose strength was prevalent.

This same thought was followed up in 1866 by four thirty-or-so-year-olds, who had taken joint action in the national organisation in the uprising days, and shared an Austrian prison. The team consisted of three young Krakow-based aristocrats: Stanisław Tarnowski (1837-1917), Stanisław Koźmian (1836-1922) and Ludwik Wodzicki (1834-94), as well as Józef Szujski (1835-83), who came from Tarnów. All of them had known one another for years, and had had a shared experience of a school or political debut under the auspices of the Paris-based Hôtel Lambert, subsequently deepened with the Galician organisation of the Whites. Although none of them joined the armed struggles, all had expiated their involvement by imprisonment (Szujski having served the longest term); and, all had their friends and relatives who fought and were killed (like Juliusz, Stanisław Tarnowski's brother) behind the Russian cordon, or deported to Siberia. All of them actively joined the building of Galicia's autonomy and eventually took high-ranking public posts: Tarnowski, a historian and literary critic, became at some point the long-term Chancellor of the Jagiellonian University; Wodzicki was appointed Speaker (*marszałek*) of the Galician parliament; Koźmian, a publicist and critic, held the post of director with the Krakow theatre; Szujski, a historian and writer, the most prominent mind and the most proficient penman among them, performed parliamentary functions.

Przegląd Polski, a periodical founded in 1866 in Krakow was the first step on the way to these careers. The programme essay, titled *Kilka prawd z dziejów naszych. Ku rozważeniu w chwili obecnej* ['Some truths from our history. For consideration at the present moment'], was written by Józef Szujski. The central message deemed the *liberum conspiro* rule no less suicidal than the *liberum veto* once was; in a broader context, condemned was the nobility's, or 'noble', liberty, as a traditional concept – the factor that had led to the disastrous Partitions; in the nineteenth century, it was a driver pushing the Poles into unreasoning

and hopeless armed strains. A mere few years after the January Insurrection, the Poles in Galicia were faced with a unique chance for political freedom with no need to conspire, struggle, or spill blood; but, to cope with it, they had to "become able to compose a government and reorganise society".

> In the spring of 1866, Stanisław Tarnowski, having exited the prison, came in Krakow market square across the undersigned. "What is it that we might conceive, what shall we do?", asked he. "We will issue a political periodical." "All right; but, how come, just the two of us?" "Szujski will, too." […] They both came to see Szujski, successfully solicited the participation of Ludwik Wodzicki, and so *Przegląd Polski* had its first fascicle issued on 1st July 1866.
> Stanisław Koźmian, *Rzecz o roku 1863* ['A story of the Year 1863'], Kraków 1896, p. 361.

The editors of *Przegląd Polski* were able to understand the political settlements that 1866 abounded with, and discount them in view of their purposes. 1866 saw Austria disgracefully defeated in the war with Prussia, which resulted in accelerated reforms carried out by the Habsburg monarchy. In December, the Galician Diet issued a servile address to the Emperor, claiming: "With no concern of deviation from our national thought, faithful in the mission of Austria, we hereby declare, from the bottom of our hearts, that we do stand by Your Majesty, and indeed are willing to do so." For some, this marked the disgraceful proof of conformity and betrayal, and disdain for all those who took part in the uprising (especially, the Galicians), suffering and dying in order to testify to an utterly converse truth. For the others, however, this address came as evidence of the political maturity of the Austrian Poles who apparently could comprehend the opportunities opening for them by the favourable political situation.

Szujski, Tarnowski, Koźmian and Wodzicki advocated the latter option out of hand. The reality of the late 1860s/early 1870s suggests that their decision was innovative, made in contravention of the convictions and habits of a large share of Galicia's intellectual elite which cultivated its deeply-rooted distrust toward the Austrian authorities and a no-less-deep attachment to the idea of irredentism. These attitudes were challenged by *Teka Stańczyka* ['Stańczyk's File'], of 1870, a lampoon aimed by the *Przegląd* editors against their political opponents, the so-called Galician democrats, and, in the first place, against the traditional and apparently no-more-useful way of thinking about Poland, her past and her future.

Teka Stańczyka, following which the entire milieu of Krakow conservatives started being called the '*Stańczyks*', declared war to the entrancing patriotism which mechanically reproduced the unworldly illusions of the Romanticists, and was not strong enough to recognise their failure in the post-Insurrection realities. Fondness for Polish things, which under the Galician autonomy's realities

boiled down to empty and simply farcical gestures of patriotic ritual, national tattoos, divine services and chats, making society's conscience dormant, like a laudanum. As a replacement, *Teka* authors proposed a programme of strenuous work over the economic and political development of Galicia within the Habsburg monarchy; a work that much later, years and years afterwards, would regain for the contemporaries the grandeur of the Poland-of-yore, the country of the Piasts and the Jagiellons.

Szujski, Koźmian, and the literary historian Tarnowski, represented the so-called Krakow School (of which more will be said below). The theses it proposed, such as the "youngerness of the civilisational development" of Poland compared to Western countries (Szujski), or the Polish nation's contribution to the fall of its own state, were subsequently fundamentally adopted by Polish historiography. The Krakow daily *Czas* was the conservatives' political organ and one of the major opinion-forming newspapers countrywide; its editorial team were immersed in an "acute, sceptical atmosphere, one of the backstage life"[36]. Among those who joined the team at various times were Koźmian, Popiel and, later on Tadeusz 'Boy' Żeleński and Rudolf Starzewski – the latter being the archetype for the memorable Journalist in S. Wyspiański's play *Wesele* ['The Wedding']. However, in the Galicia of the second half of the 19th century, it was just one among the several proposed options, passionately criticised by journalists affiliated to the political camp of the democrats, contemptuously referred to by their opponents as 'spread-eaglists', challenged by the Galician Positivists and, later on, ruthlessly attacked by representatives of other options, such as nationalists and socialists.

At least three of the critics whose background was the Galician 'blimpishness' demand being remembered by posterity due to their life paths as well as their journalistic and scientific output. Two of them, willingly recognised as the leading guards of the Romanticist tradition in autonomous Galicia, where Romanticism was gradually losing to the pragmatism of political life, originally came from the Russian Partition and both had a period of active participation in the independence movement as part of their biographies. The third man was a native of Lwów, and survived the Insurrection at the age of eleven, and then grew to become its most enthusiastic, most patient and persistent – and, most humble – chronicler.

Agaton Giller (1831-87) came from the vicinity of Kalisz; at the age of eighteen, he illegally crossed the partitioned area's border in order to take part in the

36 Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, *Znaszli ten kraj?… Cyganeria krakowska* ['Dost thou know the country hereabouts? The Krakow bohemia'], Wrocław 2004, p. 40.

Hungarian uprising, for which he was dispatched to Siberia. Granted a pardon in 1860, he joined the national movement, and was a member of the insurgents' National Government; at a later date, he settled down in Galicia. In the last twenty years of his life, he ardently struggled against a critical interpretation of the January Insurrection, as propagated by the conservatives (this activity eventually caused that, in 1878, owing to the *Stańczyk*s' efforts, he was expelled from Galicia and had to spend the following six years in exile, in Switzerland). Giller became one of the first business-like researchers into the 1863-4 doings and events and into the history of Polish deportations to Siberia.

Publicist Stefan Buszczyński (1821-92) supported him to this end. A conspirer in his native Podolia, then an emigrant and, from 1878, a dweller of Galicia, in his numerous works, especially in the four-volume *Obrona spotwarzonego narodu* ['In defence of the defamed nation'], of 1888-94, he very fiercely and with great emotion spoke against the *Stańczyk*s, not hesitating to name them as traitors and as dissenters trying to politically capitalise on the bloody defeat of the January Insurrection.

And, there was Józef Białynia Chołodecki (1852-1935), a resident of Lwów and a descendant of a patriotic family. He devoted himself to collecting, writing down and publishing every report on the uprising, finding its participants regardless of the province of their origin or residence, their political option, or the actual contribution going to their credit.

Even if just sentimental, rather than intellectual, reasons would be ascribable to authors of the sort of Buszczyński or Chołodecki, when confronted with the *Stańczyk*s, it is fair to find that it was the former that have helped the tradition around this Insurrection survive in the Austrian Partition; the same might be true for the idea of the supra-Partition unity of the Polish people. It was to their merit that the fortieth and, especially, the fiftieth anniversary celebrations could be organised – in 1903 and 1913, respectively; thereby, the January Insurrection became a fixed item on the calendar of major Polish historical anniversaries.

At last, the experience of the fallen uprising of 1863- 4 stimulated in Galicia the development of a qualitatively new camp which took an effort to break away from the tradition of identifying Polish reasons with Catholicism and, on the other hand, with an incogitant 'blimpishness'. The Galician Positivist ideology directly referred to the intellectual achievements of publicists from before the defeat, such as Józef Supiński and, especially, the notorious article by Ludwik Powidaj titled *Polacy i Indianie* ['The Poles and the Indians'], published in December 1864, when the uprising was in decline, by the Lwów literary daily *Dziennik Literacki*.

> It was by recklessness that we have lost a political independence – and it is by recklessness that we might even lose our national individuality. Much has been forfeited so far, but everything may still be rescued. Neither doubting nor overestimating our powers is what we now need, though: let us instead, first and foremost, learn how to persistently follow our purpose, rather than casting oneself into ventures whose means do not match the goal, always bearing in mind the French proverb: *Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien* (Leave well enough alone). This is not to say that we should not be supposed to pursue things-better, but rather, not leave a good position recklessly for some delusive ideas. Ludwik Powidaj, *Polacy i Indianie* ['The Poles and the Indians'], *Dziennik Literacki*, 1864, no. 53.

In Powidaj's opinion, similarly to the Irokezes in North America, the Poles in the latter half of the 19th century actually lost their right to a unique position among the contemporary independent nations of the world, as they were losing to their invaders in the fields that proved crucial to the survival of nations – that is, culture, education, and the economy. This same thought was taken over by the Galician Positivists who from 1869-74 edited the daily *Kraj* in Krakow (later, from 1874 to 1881, a literary/artistic/scientific/social weekly, so described by its title: *Tygodnik Literacki, Artystyczny, Naukowy i Społeczny*). Using the platform of *Kraj*, they attempted to resolve all the substantial disputes Poles were involved in at the time: the issues around the modernisation of the education system, the adaptation of Darwinism to a society that traditionally trusted the constructions and explanations offered by the Catholic Church, and the ideological rivalry between the *Stańczyk*s and the Positivist camps. In the Galician realities, the commentators affiliated to *Kraj* were losing the ideological disputes to their adversaries, leftist and rightist alike. The local intelligentsia was not numerous enough to compete against them and counterbalance the simultaneously emerging Positivism of Warsaw-by-birth. Still, the challenges, questions, and doubts were identical.

2. Warsaw Positivism

In Warsaw, which still witnessed the trials of January Insurrection partakers, the voice of a vehement, rapacious and virulent criticism of the Polish present day resounded even more distinctly. Almost in parallel with *Przegląd Polski*, a weekly review *Przegląd Tygodniowy* appeared (in 1866), whose editorial team was composed of a group of young individuals who with time were labelled the Warsaw Positivists. *Przegląd* was founded by Adam Wiślicki, and its contributors included a number of the Main School's students, turning at a later date into eminent exponents of Polish literature and science: Piotr Chmielowski, the literary critic; Józef Kotarbiński, the publicist, drama critic and actor; Walery

Przyborowski, the journalist and man-of-letters; the novelists Henryk Sienkiewicz and Adolf Dygasiński; Aleksander Kraushar, the historian; and, first and foremost, Aleksander Świętochowski, the publicist, penman and ideologist, called years after 'the Pope of Polish Positivism'. The assumption was that *Przegląd* would severely judge the national faults and imperfections, diagnose the Polish backwardness and obscurantism, criticise the thoughtless and complacent journalistic milieu. The weekly published the most important Positivist manifestos by Świętochowski: *My i wy* ['Us and Them'] (1871), *Prasa warszawska* ['The Warsaw press'] (1871), *Opinia publiczna* ['Public opinion'] (1872), *Praca u podstaw* ['Grassroots work'] (1873), Adam Wiślicki's *Groch o ścianę* ['Falling on deaf ears'], and a number of other polemical texts.

> It was customary then to extol and praise to the skies in the Warsaw press everything native, as opposed to the *rotten fruits* borne by the West. We were virtuous, wise, and morally righteous; we were the *Christ of the nations*, climbing up the Golgotha for humanity. Our family and home lives, our customs and habits, our literature and arts were the only beautiful, sage, and virtuous ones. […] The first [issue of] *Przegląd* addressed exactly that nonsense, that injudicious boastfulness, that noisome hashish which had intoxicated us with frankincense of our own perfectness – and this was an extraordinary novelty and uncommon temerity indeed […].
> *Stara i młoda prasa. Przyczynek do historii literatury ojczystej 1866-1872. Kartki ze wspomnień Eksdziennikarza* ['The press old and new. A contribution to the history of our vernacular literature, 1866-72. Some pages from the memories of an Ex-journalist'], ed. by D. Świerczyńska, Warszawa 1998, p. 11 (1st ed.: Petersburg, 1897).

Przegląd Tygodniowy turned out to be the most important organ of the so-called 'young Warsaw press' in the late sixties and early seventies, but the Positivist programme inspired the editorial teams of other periodicals as well. An essential opinion-forming and scientific role is definitely ascribable to the following magazines: *Wędrowiec* (established in as early as 1863), an illustrated weekly dealing with social, moral and customs-related aspects of life in Polish territories and elsewhere, edited by Filip Sulimierski; *Bluszcz* (1865), the first periodical that propagated moderate slogans of women's emancipation, edited by the poetess Maria Ilnicka, co-author of the Insurgents' Manifesto of 1863; *Niwa* (1872), a scientific-and-literary magazine, represented the so-called moderate wing of the Positivist camp and turned clearly conservative afterwards; also, the literary-political *Biesiada Literacka*, established in 1876. One more periodical of importance to Warsaw's and to national ideological and scientific life emerged in the same year: *Ateneum* was intended by its creators Włodzimierz Spasowicz and the historian Adolf Pawiński to form the centre of scientific life in Warsaw, as an encyclopaedic magazine dealing with a variety of scientific and literary problems.

Its founders were supported by a team of contributors involved in propagation of the rules of Positivism, including Chmielowski and Prus. Although it did not take part in the most fervent press debates, *Ateneum* played an essential part as a forum publishing articles on research done in the fields of the natural-sciences and the humanities, along with reviews and reports on trans-cordon and foreign publications.

The philippics of the young Positivists were mostly targeted at the old Warsaw press, periodicals in existence for years and dozens of years, dominant in the market and gathering penmen of renown to their editorial boards. These mainly included two daily papers: *Kurier Warszawski*, under the command of Wacław Szymanowski, an eminent journalist, and *Gazeta Polska*. There was also *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, a weekly magazine, the widest-read periodical in Polish lands and one of the most modern in Europe. Another one was *Biblioteka Warszawska*, a literary-scientific monthly edited by Kazimierz-Władysław Wóycicki. This same current was moreover represented by a few periodicals set up after the uprising's fall, for example, *Kłosy*, or the Catholic and conservative *Kronika Rodzinna* ['Family Chronicle'], run by Aleksandra Borkowska and targeted, mostly, at the female reader. The ideological clash of the 'young' and 'old' press in the late 1860s/early 1870s suggests analogies with the dispute between the Romanticists and the Classicists carried out several decades earlier, with its strength of attack and resistance, its extremity of attitudes and its scale of disclosed emotion. But this newer battle did not bring a victor as unambiguous as that earlier one. The programme proposed by the young Positivists was accepted by a number of Polish intelligentsia members of the latter half of the century, who implemented it with a lesser or greater consistency and persistence. But those who had developed it often doubted their own reasons – especially, the potential to instil them on the Polish soil, whilst the 'young press' camp grew deeply spilt ideologically and politically in the course of a dozen-or-so years.

The diagnosis the young Positivists formulated about their nation around 1870 almost called into question the very sense of going through a treatment. Poles in the Russian Partition – the largest and most populous part of the Polish territory – had incurred a really heavy and bitter military and political defeat in their last armed burst for independence. Opinion sometimes was held that this was also a moral defeat, and only the later appearance of some historical and literary texts – E. Orzeszkowa's short-story cycle *Gloria victis* at the head – was to change this conviction. The sense of a total disaster grew even severer owing to the dismantling of the Congress Kingdom's structures, the ousting of the Polish element from public life (particularly in the Stolen Lands), and the rapid restructuring of the country's social system. The enfranchisement reform carried

out in the Russian Partition changed the ownership relations in the countryside almost overnight, undermining the material foundation of the landed gentry's existence, making peasants equal in rights with their lords. The peasants were now told to take decisions affecting their communities at a communal authority level. Still, the reform did not eliminate the age-long arrears as far as education, or the sense of responsibility for the country, was concerned.

At that same time, modern economic conditions were developing more and more extensively, faster and faster – especially in the ex-Congress Kingdom area. Great capital (usually, of a non-Polish origin) determined the standard and the pace of existence for a multitude of workers; within one generation, there arose and developed not only factories or industrial districts, but also big cities, such as Łódź, Białystok, and Częstochowa. Simultaneously, in the western and eastern fringes of the Polish cultural community, Polishness was recoiling under the pressure of the German and Russian elements, augmented by the partitioners' actions. With regards to civilisational advancement, the distance between Poland and the most developed nations of Western Europe was growing. The Polish intellectual elite tended, however, not to notice this state of affairs, enduring in irrational complacency and a sense of illusionary security. Those whose mode of thinking was traditional (or, simply, mindless, as Świętochowski and some others would put it), strove to keep up the decayed patterns of social structure, family, educational and upbringing methods, literature or religiosity in an epoch when qualitatively new social phenomena were inevitably bound to blow up the immemorial complexion.

The young Positivists complemented such observations with thoughts found in the writings of Western scholars and philosophers, especially English ones. Above all, they appreciated the works of the cultural historian and sociologist Henry Thomas Buckle, and those of Herbert Spencer. A Polish edition of Buckle's *History of Civilization in England* had just been released (1862-5) in Lwów. This author's strongly suggested view of a nation's history describes it as a process driven by the rules of social development, emphasising development's dependence upon geographical and climatic determinants on the one hand, and on the intellectual advancement of societies on the other. Young Poles of the period found this vision extremely convincing and intellectually fertile; it revolutionarily aimed at the old belief in Providence intervening in history, with the key role of great individuals and, indirectly, in a trivialised conviction about Poland's unique significance in the history of Europe and the world. "Only tenuous, profiteerist, career-preoccupied, indifferent or, simply, stupid minds could not feel those currents, could not belong to the Bucklists or the later Positivists", one of the contemporary confessors of the English historian's ideas wrote.

Herbert Spencer was the other author zealously read by young Polish Positivists. The works of this English engineer, philosopher and sociologist, the most eminent exponent of sociological evolutionism, suggested to Polish readers the statement whereby human society undergoes the same rules of universal development as solar systems, chemical compounds, biological organisms, and cultures do: it is namely subject to incessant change and development which means progress. Individuals render themselves subject to this evolution by the same degree that the social collectivity they form do; thus, they also can progressively develop, much in the way biological mechanisms, or products of human thought, do. West-European Positivism was never transplanted onto Polish soil in a pure form; in the views of Świętochowski, Prus, or Julian Ochorowicz, any borrowed idea were confronted and modified to meet the expectations within the Polish realities. However, it was the belief, following Spencer, that "society or, in fact, a nation, is a living organism" (to quote Prus), that lay at the root of the programme of reforms they proposed.

The first item on this agenda was the finding that the Polish nation had no adequate physical, material or moral forces to count on for a fast reconstruction of its statehood. Even though they would not completely abolish the hope for the country's independence, they would remove it very far into future; the present day was supposed to be filled with working on multiplying the nation's strengths across the domains of material and spiritual life. Only such earnest collective effort could help remove from the Poles the threat of their disintegration, of being irrevocably dissolved in the communities of the partitioning powers:

> Plainly enough, one among the reasons for the calamities that have affected us was a lack of harmony appearing between our powers and our designs; being unaware of one's weakness is a fatal error indeed, and our repentance is hard. Today, taught through the experience, let us, accordingly, alter the system by restricting our plans and labours to a slender circle of everyday relations. The general order of Nature has it that who is strong, his is the say and the influence, whilst incomprehension of this rule, scaling the towering posts without appropriate qualifications, may arouse laughter and contempt, whereas stout-hearted resignation can save our dignity, even if nothing more.
> Bolesław Prus, *Nasze grzechy* ['Our sins'], 'Opiekun Domowy', 1872, no. 22.

The main advice derived from this ascertainment was the watchword of 'organic work'. Clearly, a similar recommendation had many times been put forward before the Positivists formulated it, and was implemented in various provinces of the divided Poland, especially in the Prussian Partition. But the Positivists of Warsaw derived it from careful observation and a coherent intellectual programme. The Poland of the latter half of the 19th century was a country of enormous negligence and great civilisational arrears, which ensued not only, and not

primarily, from her political situation but also from the indifference of the Polish elites. The Positivists – among them, Bolesław Prus, whose voice, expressed in the *Weekly Chronicles* cycle for several dozen years, was the strongest and the most consistent – appealed for continuous, day-to-day considerate effort aimed, on the one hand, at the development of Polish industry and agriculture, and at an increase of savings and accumulation of capitals; on the other hand, they called for spreading enlightenment among the poorest strata, for the moral education of society, for propagating hygienic principles; other items on this agenda included the organisation of summer holiday camps, funding free-of-charge milk for infants, or even instilling the habit of washing hands before meals and taking a weekly bath. In order to take up such efforts and persevere with them, the Polish intelligentsia ought, it was claimed, to reconstruct a set of their own needs, priorities and habits, focusing on tasks that were traditionally regarded as less important, and much less satisfying.

The old system of values caused that in the course of the 19th century, the civilisational chasm between Poland and Western Europe was deepening steadily. Having found an easy method to improve the collective self-image by trivialised messianistic concepts, the Poles were increasingly lagging behind in the achievements of the nineteenth century – elsewhere, the age of unprecedented social transformations, technological progress and scientific developments. The Positivists diagnosed this condition and proposed a rough treatment; they were the first to suggest that the doors to Europe be broken down, and that the nation's intellectual and creative powers be multiplied in order to level the existing disproportions – the postulates which were put forth many a time later on.

> Even in the political calculus, it is only enlightened nations that count. What we therefore ought to do is not just invigorate ourselves, form the intellect, develop a brave character, and cherish the pure sentiment of love to our country, but also – to the extent allowed by the dependency of our collective labour upon its conditions – permanently breathe the fresh air of progress of general human thought, feed our own organisms with the blood regenerated by it, and exert its whole creative energy. […] More windows to Europe should be cut, and its currents allowed to blow through our sultry cabin.
> Aleksander Świętochowski, *Ze wskazań politycznych* ['Some political indications'], in: *Ognisko. Księga poświęcona 25-leciu twórczości T.T. Jeża* ['The focus. A book on the occasion of 25th anniversary of creative activity of T.T. Jeż']. Warszawa 1882.

This is not to say that the image of the West, as seen by the Positivists, was clear of nuances and shades. The predatory capitalism was willingly stigmatised, along with the inhuman living conditions in industrial cities, a materialised model of life in a world where stock-exchange quotations top the value curve. Images portraying this world, repellent and threatening, set against the traditional order

of an idyllic province or cul-de-sac, are primarily found in the works of Polish naturalist authors and, to some extent, in Prus and Orzeszkowa. In developing an ideal model for the spiritual leader of the nation, a real 'modern hero', B. Prus used the example of Ernst Abbe, the German scholar and industrialist. This man offered to humanity useful inventions, he created new jobs, he propagated welfare and education among his employees, he proved capable of acting without doing harm to humans and feeling no pride in his own achievements. Not only Polish scientists and intellectuals, factory owners and entrepreneurs too, should follow his steps, this author claimed.

Imitating the patterns flowing from the West, even though not all of them were luminous, was never meant to be uncritical and thoughtless, or imply a rejection of one's national identity. "Let us not despise any of the homely founts, even if most slimed, but let us dredge each of them", Świętochowski wrote. Prus, for his part, emphasised ad nauseam that any educational, creative or artistic work aimed at developing Polish national productivity and output, a 'Polish style' in all the areas of collective activity. In spite of all these objections, the second half of the 19th century – following the years of passionate criticism of the West, formulated by the Romanticist authors – was a period in which the conviction strengthened among the whole Polish intelligentsia, Galician conservatives included, whereby membership of Western civilisation was a value in its own right, whilst Polish people ought to spare no effort not to cease belonging to this civilisational circle.

Following the recognition of national backwardness and infirmities, audacious attempts were made at revaluating the inherited tradition and vision of the national past. The intellectually deepest and furthest-reaching afterthought on Polish history was formulated after the January Insurrection by representatives of the Krakow historical school. The already-mentioned *Teka Stańczyka*, branded the clamorous and mindless patriotic behaviours, and the use of national staffage in bringing about political objectives. The Krakow historians described anew Polish history as a whole, the issue of familiarity and strangeness, modernity and backwardness over the ages and, especially, cause-and-effect relations that had led to the fall of the Commonwealth. The studies by Józef Szujski, Stanisław Koźmian and, primarily, Michał Bobrzyński's *Dzieje Polski w zarysie* ['An outlined history of Poland'] (first edited in 1879), were of crucial importance in this context. The latter mentioned synthetic work, whose author was aged below thirty, became the object of fierce polemics, and initiated a long-lasting and much fruitful intellectual debate. Like the *Stańczyk*s a decade earlier, Bobrzyński emphatically and decidedly rejected the romantic tradition of a liberation struggle and exhibited the ancestors' mistakes with a view to protect posterity against

them. This author's arguments, chimed in by Szujski, for example, in his article *O fałszywej historii jako mistrzyni fałszywej polityki* ['False history as a master of false politics'], came as probably the most audacious attempt, in Polish historiography, at struggling with the bracing national historiographical stereotypes seeking in the past events the reasons for pride and easy excuses for failures.

> There was not a single state in Europe against which, in, roughly, the modern times, amidst the overall struggle for existence, its neighbours would not have conspired, and against which they would have not dispatched formidable regiments from every quarter; but still, even the relatively petty nations managed to stay vertical, and conclude the fight with a victorious outcome. […] We have been the one and only to have fallen, without fighting, with no real combat we could have otherwise afforded. […] We rejected the summons, for such was our inner collapse and derangement, such was the measure of errors and sins that had bedazzled us. May we, also, look for the essential reason for the misfortune within ourselves, because then, once we recover from the decay within us, we might again become respected, and needed.
> Michał Bobrzyński, *Uwagi* ['Remarks'] regarding *Dzieje Polski w zarysie* ['An outlined history of Poland']; quoted after the edition: Warszawa 1974, pp. 448-449.

Protests against the historical 'pessimism' of the Krakow scholars arose willingly, loudly, affectively, and not quite wisely; deeply thoughtful and intellectually stimulating opinions were expressed, in particular, by exponents of the so-called Warsaw Historical School. Władysław Smoleński and Tadeusz Korzon, the most distinguished among them, were quite different from each other. Born in 1839 in Minsk, Korzon studied in Moscow, took part in plotting activities before the January Insurrection, experienced deportation to the Orenburg *Guberniya*, and eventually settled in Warsaw. Smoleński, twelve-years his younger, was a Mazovian; expelled from a Płock gymnasium for his protest against religious instruction being taught in Russian, he attended schools in Warsaw, graduated from a Law faculty, and eventually switched to History. Common to both gentlemen was their independence-centred attitude, although this was based on varying practical guidance, depending on the time and place; also, they shared the disaster experience and, consequently, the considerations common to all the Warsaw Positivists.

In an attempt at responding to the Krakow historians' propositions ascribing the responsibility for the collapse of the Polish state to its nation, the Warsaw scholars postulated a departure from a strictly political history in favour of studies on the condition of Polish society in the 17th and, particularly, the 18th century. The purpose would be to confront the maleficent 'crimsons' (i.e. Polish noblemen of ancient stock), petty noblemen intoxicated with the Sarmatian myth and a strong *węgrzyn* (popular Hungarian wine), or the traitorous Targowicians, with

a retinue of unquestionable clearheaded heroes, such as King John III Sobieski, Tadeusz Kościuszko, Hugo Kołłątaj, and Prince Józef Poniatowski. The Commonwealth collapsed resulting from a tangle of its own demerits or delinquencies and external aggression, the Warsaw historians claimed. The fall came when the country became capable of diagnosing its ailment and took efforts to counteract it – not always in an ill-considered, unwise or dangerous manner: quite wisely indeed, heroically, and admirably at times. Rather than being a historical 'optimism', this scholarly option was at least a remarkable attempt at saving some dignity in face of defeat.

In contrast to the conservatives of Galician origin, the Warsaw Positivists regarded inequality in social relations to be the heaviest burden of the Polish past and present. The attitude toward the nobility and nobility-related traditions had since the early 19th century been central to the intelligentsia's self-determination; they determined their peculiar system of values through accepting or rejecting various elements of historical heritage. Worldview differences among the Positivists manifested themselves distinctly in this domain. For those representing the moderate wing – Henryk Sienkiewicz and Ludwik Górski among them – the tradition of the Polish nobility, with its sense of responsibility for the country and a readiness to incur the severest sacrifice in its interest, was the crucial aspect of national identity. Sienkiewicz best expressed this in a popular fashion in his novel *Ogniem i mieczem* ['With Fire and Sword'] (1883-4). For the most radical thinkers, like Aleksander Świętochowski, the 'caste-system prejudice' inherited from the Commonwealth of yore imposed a grievous restriction – to be rejected in its entirety so that a modern, equitable and enlightened society could be built in the country on the Vistula.

An ambivalent approach toward the past and present roles and tasks of the landowning gentry is shown by two novels penned by two of the most proficient Positivist authors. The gallery of characters they portray features spirituals heirs to the Targowica Confederacy members, revellers finding it so easy to sell their own property and the country for foreign money, coxcombs scorning their countryside neighbours, individuals alienated spiritually and in terms of their system of values, or even their language. The squire in B. Prus's *Placówka* and the pageant of negative characters in E. Orzeszkowa's *Nad Niemnem* are such figures. Standing on the opposite pole are Benedykt and Witold Korczyński of the latter novel: although not clear of deficiencies, they approach the noble tradition as a means of defending Polish culture and the national inventory, possessions and assets in the Eastern Borderlands, one that implies the need to propagate education and modern methods of management, housekeeping and farming in the owned estate as well as among the surrounding peasantry.

This was the model of the landlord, or the squire – a sapient employer and master, a proponent of progress in the country, and a socially useful individual – that the Positivist journalistic writing propagated. "What a radius might be used to make a circle within which the activities of our *nobility* [orig., *szlachta*, italicised] ought to be comprised, and might be respected?", Świętochowski asked in 1883. "The agro-industry, in the material direction; enhanced the education and morality of the folk and influence upon communal institutions, so demanded (for the community as a whole), in the spiritual one. This is the *nobility*'s only *mission-and-message* that we profess and that it is capable of fulfilling." Recognising this principle, the traditional elite's educating model was only to provide the elements that would help form a citizen mindful of the country and fellow human beings, practical, and serviceable to others; the remaining aspects should be rejected and immersed into oblivion. Consequently, the Positivists claimed the need for a new educational programme for the family and the school, with emphasis put on furnishing young people with practical skills, at the expense of a passion for literary or artistic professions, which was ingrained in Polish tradition. Given the market conditions of the latter half of the 19th century, free competition in the labour market and a common surplus of the intelligentsia, only a practical usefulness of school-based knowledge could ensure young people a livelihood, while giving the country an opportunity to develop materially.

The awareness of how impaired the development of Polish culture was under the partitions, and of the rules governing the capitalist labour market, also had a bearing on the criticisms of the position of literature and arts. Bolesław Prus excelled in such critiques: for him, the publication of literary pieces that he consecutively penned (and typewrote, since 1890) was always ancillary to a pedagogical and/or publicist purpose; moreover, his attitude to his own literary output was quite ambiguous (he valued mathematics and music the most, among human achievements). The history of his country meant that the role of poetry, visual arts and theatre in nineteenth-century Poland was bloated beyond ordinary measure. The Positivists wanted to apply the same measure to creative artists as with scholars, inventors and entrepreneurs, in view of their usefulness to the society they were part of. It is a paradox of Polish Positivism that this concept was formulated the most explicitly in the most uncommon fictional works, such as Prus's *Lalka* (The Doll), *Faraon* (Pharaoh), or Orzeszkowa's *Nad Niemnem*:

> Poets and painters, themselves and their works, are, apprehended most generally, the fruits of life and social development. Once the community weakens, perish they will; if it grows powerful, they will multiply and become powerful too. According, therefore, to the plans of nature, a society is not to serve the art: the art is to serve the society instead. A human is worth more than his painting; a nation is worth more than its products.

> Going further, the beauty in life and in the nation is worth more than the beauty in paintings, music, and poems.
> Bolesław Prus, *Kronika Tygodniowa*, *Nowiny*, 1883, no. 317; quoted after: *Kroniki* ['The Chronicles'], vol. 6, Warszawa 1957, p. 258.

A critical afterthought of the Warsaw Positivists extended to the teachings of the Catholic Church in the history of Poland and, in general, the role of religion in the reality of the second half of the 19th century. People of the mental formation determined by time and space, educated with books by Western scholars (in particular, Renan's *The Life of Jesus*, 1863), believed, without dejection, in the possibility that the world is describable in scientific terms. For them, science not only ensured the civilisational development of societies but was also the key to satisfying any metaphysical yearnings and fears that a human individual might have. None of the taboos imposed by institutionalised religions were supposed to constrain and restrain it.

> … above everything you are to worship, do hold truth, regardless of the source it flows out of, and of the habits it may violate in you. Knowledge is the strongest power, the loftiest dignity; it shall give you happiness, satisfaction, prosperity; it shall make you a great, famous, wise, and honest man. You can proudly hold your head high and yield yourself to no sentiment at all, but what you have to do is to abase before this goddess Almighty.
> Aleksander Świętochowski, *Katechizm rodzinny* ['The family catechism'], *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 1873, no. 40.

As far as the attitude to religion was concerned, differences between the Partitions were clearly distinct, which was especially true for the dichotomy between Galicia – Krakow, in the first place – and the Kingdom of Poland, Warsaw first of all. Until the early 20th century, the Galician intellectual elites never proposed a programme that would be as openly critical of the Polish pattern of religiosity, or, even less so, of religion as such. The reasons included the stability and powerfulness of the ecclesiastical structures of Krakow; the social structure of the city, with the Catholic clergy and aristocracy traditionally enjoying a respectable position; and, the relatively high intellectual formation of the former, as testified to by the clergymen's participation in most of the intellectual debates taking place in Galicia. A flagship example was the Jesuit monthly *Przegląd Powszechny*, edited from 1884 by Fr. Marian Morawski: while not shunning controversy-triggering topics, this magazine opened its columns to authors of various outlooks and from various life paths (one of them being Eliza Orzeszkowa, for instance).

The situation of the Catholic clergy in the Russian Partition was quite different: there, in view of the repressive policies pursued by the state, the Church set as the central task for itself to retain the area of its power. As a result, it regarded

as a real menace not only the actions of the Russian authorities and the Orthodox religion supported by them, but also the laicised intelligentsia and, in the later period, any formations of a left-wing or leftist character.

A Church of this kind – uneducated, obscurant, parochial, which sanctioned with its authority practices and beliefs that verged on superstition, wizardry and witchcraft — became an obvious target of attack for the Warsaw Positivists, who propagated elimination of the immemorial backwardness and a necessity for Poland to join the nineteenth-century family of enlightened nations. Even in this sphere, however, the differences between the programme declared and the choices made by the leading representatives of the trend proved significant. A steadfast consistency was exhibited by the 'pope of Positivism', Świętochowski, who kept repeating the same anticlerical, sometimes very emotional arguments in *Przegląd Tygodniowy* and as a columnist of *Prawda* (a weekly established in 1881). His contemporaries criticised not so much the Church itself and the acts or transgressions of its priests, as the form of Polish religiousness, shaped – as many other domains of collective life — in the shade of the state's catastrophe and the prolonged bondage of the country.

"People went to church as if to see a spectacle", wrote Bolesław Prus at the beginning of 20th century, "they prayed like Tibetan prayer-wheels, consoling themselves that confession would settle all the informalities of life; they hated heretics and sceptics, and demanded from God that He settle all their needs: family, hygienic, economic, and political. God the Lord was obligated to give them health and property; they counted that the Lord should try and win freedom for their chosen nation."

That the readers of the most widely-read novelistic series of the era, Henryk Sienkiewicz's historical Trilogy, could find in it an affirmation of such a criticism-prone model, can be regarded as yet another paradox of Polish Positivism. The stereotype of the 'Catholic Pole' owes as much to Sienkiewicz's creation as to the experiences of wars and the political vicissitudes of the 17th and 18th centuries. The credit for attempts at breaking this stereotype goes to the radical Warsaw intelligentsia of the Positivist era, as they called into question the established models of public, family-related and, finally, sexual life[37], giving rise to the lay,

37 Notorious divorces and remarriages by elite exponents such as Tytus Chałubiński, Aleksander Świętochowski, Antoni Sygietyński and Franciszek Olszewski (the latter replaced his father-in-law Wacław Szymanowski as a member of the *Kurier Warszawski* editorial board) definitely played an essential part in the parallel debates on the limits of individuals' liberty in a traditional society and on the role of woman within and outside the family.

left-minded or openly leftist intelligentsia – a formation remaining present in the intellectual life of Poland for the following century.

The list of major challenges the Poles faced in the reality of the second half of the 19th century should definitely include the phenomena of social life, as important as the pervasion into the educated elites of representatives of hitherto-underprivileged groups, Jews and women first of all. The social and individual dimension of these developments has already been mentioned; the focus will now be on the accompanying intellectual discourse.

The Positivist programme for the educational and moral elevation of society extended to the Jewish population inhabiting Polish territories. The Positivists assumed that the cures which were due to heal the sore points of the Polish community – that is, crossing out the inequalities inherited from feudalism and a prudent education policy – would also help solve the Jewish question. "Whatever the point of departure for this issue", Orzeszkowa wrote in her article *O Żydach i kwestii żydowskiej* ['Jews and the Jewish question'], "we requisitely come across the terms: education and justice: this being like a vicious circle". In her novels, this author eradicated the commonplace stereotype of the 'Jew, the rapacious usurer', and appealed for sympathy and understanding for these people, and indicated the way to solve the problem: a consistent educational programme which would drive Jews (and, Poles) out of what was seen by the Positivists as a result of centuries-long negligence and ignorance. For adherents of educated and laicised society, forereaching the West and cutting windows to Europe, the culture of Jewish *shtetleh* was a condition as pathological as the ignorance and illiteracy of the Polish countryside, the parochialism of the small towns and the sluggishness of the manor dwellers. The mythologised 'education and justice' were meant to turn the orthodox Jewish populace into aware and valuable citizens of the country, whilst the Jewish elite was supposed to become assimilated to Polish culture, till they both fused together completely.

The views close to those of Warsaw Positivists were worded by Galician democrats. Teofil Merunowicz, one of them, claimed – in his *Żydzi. Studium społeczne* ['The Jews. A social study'], of 1879 – that the Jewish religion's superstitions failed in the progressive nineteenth century, and expressed his belief that "also those Jews who, resulting from their innate personal generosity as well as fortunate intellectual influence, have managed to rise above the level of the racial jaundice of their fellow-believers toward all the nations of the world" would pretty much understandingly join in the countering of such superstitions.

In spite of the condescending attitude of Merunowicz and similar authors, a kindred programme advocating the assimilation in the sphere of morality, spirituality, politics and – in its most radical version – religion, was propagated by

Jewish assimilators associated with periodicals such as *Izraelita*, edited by Samuel Cwi Peltyn in Warsaw (from 1866), or *Ojczyzna* (1881), edited, in Krakow, by Wilhelm Feldman. The programme proved somewhat successful in the course of several dozen years, whilst the Polish intelligentsia grew more diverse with the number of outstanding individuals and entire families of Jewish descent that joined its ranks (as mentioned earlier).

The assimilation programme aroused, in parallel, critical opinions from Polish as well as Jewish commentators. Its Polish opponents pointed out that the assimilation of Jewish masses to Polishness was a reverie under the partition conditions, since Poles were deprived of the most important instruments through which society could be unified, and which modern governments had at their disposal: the army and schools, both subject to the state idea. In nationally homogenous countries, these very institutions are crucial for a coherent cultural mien of their citizens; in Polish lands, they remained the partitioners' responsibility (save for the autonomous Galicia). As Polishness was a subjugated and underprivileged element in the Poles' own country, equal rights for Jews situated this community on a de-facto better position against the others, as it stimulated behaviours and traits traditionally deemed to be the dominants of the Jewish character: a passion for trading operations and usury, the intent to subordinate the world, at least in its economic aspect, and to incapacitate non-Jews, an inclination for plotting, machinations and hole-and-corner manipulation. Then, as T. Merunowicz put it, their position appears "unconditionally detrimental to our organic powers".

Similar were the views of Jan Jeleński, editor of *Rola*, an anti-Semitic weekly published from 1883 in Warsaw, and the author of a book titled *Żydzi, Niemcy i my* ['Jews, Germans, and us'], which earlier on (1876) relentlessly attacked assimilation utopias and recommended to Poles the adoption of "resistant action tactics" with respect to Jews. Within the Jewish society dwelling in Poland, Jeleński discerned three groups, equally detrimental, to his mind, to Poles: a plutocracy, characterised by a lust for power and national indifferentism; "superstitious, fanaticised ignoramuses" living at the expense of others in their locked-up ghettos; and, the intelligentsia, also a dangerous group as it gradually penetrated into the Polish environment, but first of all, was too scarce to have any significant bearing on Polish-Jewish relations.

The arguments proposed by Jeleński were followed up and developed on at the century's decline by anti-Semitism formulated from nationalist positions (to be covered at more length below). Let us mention that an increasingly evident fiasco of the assimilation concept, the reappearing pogroms (the first in the sequence being the 1881 pogrom of Warsaw) and the Jewish national movement,

gaining in strength at the turn of the century, eventually inciting Positivists to change their attitude. Characteristic in this respect was the world-outlook switch by Bolesław Prus who, although consistently deprecating the hateful and aggressive slogans of the nationalists, deemed it necessary, at the beginning of the new century, to restrict the number of Jews in Poland and to defy their economic and political activity. This is how the Jewish question remained one of the most entangled and most difficult issues Poland was to inherit from the hundred-and-twenty-or-so years of its Partition age, whilst assimilated Poles of Jewish descent were irretrievably losing the world of their birth and upbringing, resulting from the choice they made, gaining in return no unconditional approval from the Polish milieu.

> Ready we are to get to farm work, and you're telling us: 'The Jews are grabbing our land'; to medicine, attorneyship, notarial profession, and they're screaming: 'The Jews are drying us off [*sic*; i.e. displacing] all the posts and positions'. Limited to the trading activity, one in a thousand of us can make a fortune on it through acumen, risk and thrift, and you're crying aloud: 'The Jews are cheating and exploring!' We assume your customs and religion, in a will to be tighter-knitted with the society: will you shelter us then? *A convert!*, you would fling at us; we are abandoning our ranks whilst not attaching to yours. At last, when in a civic office willing we are to serve this land which has raised and bread us all the same; when we are ready to put our property and our work at its service, then your reply is: 'We don't want you there, go away! Go on trading and exploring, this being your only craft.'
> Kazimierz Zalewski, *Górą nasi! Komedia w pięciu aktach* ['Good for Us! A comedy in five acts'], Kraków 1885, p. 71.

The emancipation of women appeared similarly inconsistent. There were certain, already specified, political and social drivers that pushed women to join the 'working intelligentsia' or the intelligent proletariat, after the January Insurrection was defeated – and the trend, clearly, was subject to the comments of columnists of various sorts. Women in the latter half of the 19th century expressed with increasing strength and emphasis their aspirations for access to higher education, participation in public life, and autonomous positions at work and within the family. For the conservative milieus and the Catholic Church, these aspirations were unchangeably perceived as a pernicious attempt to overthrow the old social and moral order. Among a considerable number of utterances stigmatising and deriding the first 'suffragists', let us refer, by means of example, to Stanisław Krupski's novel *Pod skrzydłami Almae Matris. Wiązanka z listów medycynierki* ['Under the wing of the Alma Mater. A bundle of letters of a *médeciniere*'], of 1879. It used Polish women studying medicine in Switzerland as a pretext for a complete loosening of moral and social bonds. Until the last years of the century,

women's magazines, including *Bluszcz*, edited by Maria Ilnicka, refrained from propagating university education for women and their consistent emancipation, satisfying themselves with appeals for women to have enough room in the handiwork and teaching labour markets.

The Warsaw Positivists' stance in this respect was ambiguous too. Świętochowski alone opted for limitless emancipation, recognising the right of females to higher education and professional activity, alongside which he advocated equality within the 'partnership' of marriage, including the right to divorce at the moment "the wedlock's harmony has been upset". Prus supported a moderate assimilation, under the condition set by the traditional, purely male environment; his many comments on this matter (with the novel *Emancypantki* ['The Emancipated Women'], of 1891-3, at the head) testify that he would not conceive the idea that women could ever successfully claim a place equal to men in science, arts, or politics. Women themselves formulated the most radical programme; Eliza Orzeszkowa, who for the first generation of studying and career-pursuing women became an unchallenged intellectual authority and moral advocacy, was in the lead. It was one of the paradoxes of Polish post-1863-4 history that Orzeszkowa has been featured in the literary Parnassus and listed as a junior-high-school reading assignment with her moralistic novel cycle *Nad Niemnem* which quickly became out-of-date; in fact, she was the number-one scandalmonger of her time, a person consistently independent in her literary work and in the choices of her life. Another paradoxical thing is that Prus's *Emancypantki*, with the author proving clearly negligent of the issues he described, has been deemed a description of the emancipation of Polish women, which was not the case with Orzeszkowa's *Marta*, for a long time the most famed and most controversial novel focused on the gainful employment of women. Together with a team gathering around her, Orzeszkowa formed the first cohesive milieu that ostentatiously opted for an emancipation programme, thus setting the stage for the common participation of women in legal and illegal initiatives taking place in the late 19th and the early 20th century, as well as for the feminist movement emerging in those years in Warsaw and Lwów.

That the Warsaw Positivist milieu became at some point ideologically disintegrated could be noticed from the mid-1870s, the period when more and more impassioned manifestos were issued. This split appeared due to a number of factors, the most important – and certainly the most dramatic – among which was that most of the 'young press' representatives had lost hope for their agenda to ever be realised. Ideology and character-related differences within the group appeared to be no less important. People so different in their world outlook and temper, like Świętochowski, Chmielowski, Prus, or Sienkiewicz, could not persist

as a united camp for too long; in fact, this primarily held true for Świętochowski who, whilst the most consistent of them all in the opinions he voiced, was the hardest among them to co-operate with on a daily basis.

The magazine whose relation with the Positivist programme was rather loose was the weekly *Kraj*, edited from 1882 in Petersburg. Its cofounders Włodzimierz Spasowicz and Erazm Piltz propagated a political concept called 'tri-loyalism' whereby Poles would basically come to terms with the purposes and policies of the three partitioner governments, along with the need to strengthen contacts with the Russian liberals in view of materialising their common concept of reforming the Empire; they also supported the pan-Slavist movement. At the same time, *Kraj* advocated a set of desiderates and recommendations, proving convergent with Warsaw Positivism, in the areas of economics and the ethics of public life, and opened its columns to Prus and Orzeszkowa, among others. Moreover, being a flawlessly loyal periodical issued in Petersburg, censorship approached *Kraj* more benignly than its peers published in the Vistula Country, which at times enabled it to deal with threads and subject-matters, as, for example, a debate on emigration of Polish talents or correspondences from the Stolen Lands, which were normally barred for the Polish press 'at home'.

The ideological and political divisions within Warsaw's intellectual elite, increasing a year before *Kraj* was established, led to the emergence of two periodicals with a clearly marked editorial line, titled *Prawda* and *Słowo*. The former was created and edited by Świętochowski, who made himself a leading columnist with *Prawda*, publishing there a weekly feuilleton *Liberum veto*, polemicising with *Kraj* and tri-loyalism, repeating Positivistic slogans and recommendations. This weekly attracted a group of outstanding journalists and scholars as its contributors; much space was assigned to natural sciences, medicine, anthropology, ethnology, as well as technology and inventions. Świętochowski's feuilletons were most widely read, but, opposite to most periodicals of the period, the editorial team did not become a focus of hospitable meetings and animated exchanges of thoughts: Świętochowski's cool and reserved personality was the prevailing factor. "*Prawda* exerted an impact through the content of its articles", Ludwik Krzywicki recalled, "but its editor's personal influence on the contributors was always scanty".

Słowo stood on the opposite edge of the ideological spectrum of the first half of the eighties. This social-political daily, collaborating with Petersburg's *Kraj*, became the tribune for the grand landed gentry and advocates of conciliation. Co-edited by H. Sienkiewicz, Mścisław Godlewski, and others, the magazine was set up – to quote the former author – with a view to "defend the national spirit, so that it should not grow frail"; advocating the organic work programme, it

recognised the unexpired role of the nobility's tradition and of loyalism as the only feasible policy in the time's reality. *Słowo* focused a great deal on presenting the national life of Galicia, Wielkopolska, Silesia, as well as that of Pomerania and Mazuria. The magazine's circulation peaked under Sienkiewicz's editorship, at the time that the subsequent volumes of his *Trilogy* were printed there as episodes, from 1883-7.

The members of the 'Main School generation' in the Russian Partition, primarily in the Kingdom and in Warsaw, displayed various ideological options; they responded in various ways to the Insurrection's defeat and to the challenges of the years following it; they found multiple ways to find their feet in the new reality. The discrepancies between them enlarged with time. Still, in spite of those differences, and transcending them, people of the post-uprising generation joined their efforts in their reflection upon the future of their country. Not only did they develop a theoretical programme of rescue and improvement, but they implemented their own general recommendations, in spite of any external and internal restrictions. The Positivists' generation doubted many times in the future and in the significance of their efforts; with all that, though, they "stood the lashing of the Russian retaliation for the January Insurrection", to quote Władysław Smoleński's solemn phrase[38]. This generation proved its ability to passively defend Polish scientific and cultural resources, and moreover developed a network of mutual contacts, associations and social institutions, which was durable and flexible enough for the following generation to adapt to their new needs and purposes.

3. The means of social influence

Beginning with the 1870s, the generation of the 'young' consciously took up the mission of replacing the lost state agencies with a collective effort and social work which could only arouse admiration – and was generally taken in co-operation with representatives of the older generation. Polish political life, forbidden under Russian rule, "struck its rich roots in private homes, in the salons, which, though named 'literary', were strongly marked with a political character"[39]

38 Władysław Smoleński, *Fragment pamiętnika* ['Fragment of a diary'], in: idem, *Monteskjusz w Polsce wieku XVIII* ['Montesquieu in the 18th-century Poland'], Warszawa 1927, p. 31.

39 Ferdynand Hoesick, *Powieść mojego życia (Dom rodzicielski). Pamiętniki* ['A story of my life (My parental home). Memoirs'], Wrocław-Kraków 1959, p. 12.

There was no Polish university and no Polish schools functioning in the Russian Partition, no national ministries for science, education or culture; any countrywide or local scientific institutions ceased to exist; institutes, scientific societies and legal discussion forums were forbidden. Instead, Warsaw was covered in the latter half of the 19th century with a network of private or semi-private centres: salons, editorial offices and social institutions whose names and statutes were meant to conceal their real role; restaurants, coffee-houses, private libraries; and, finally, second-hand book shops and public parks. All of them, apart from their obvious function of providing a rendezvous for people, a background for flirtations, dances, entertainment or snobbish fashion shows, also acted as vicarious university seminars, parliamentary tribunes, and, to a certain extent, centres of executive power. It might seem that the people who contributed to this network led a more hectic life than anybody before them, or after.

With its population of just a little over 500,000, Warsaw around 1870-90 was a scene of activity of a few dozen salons of all sorts. The city's intellectual elite, strong and relatively numerous by then, amounting (with their families) to several thousand people, took part almost every week in some private parties or entertained guests: a phenomenon usual even in the realities of a time that knew no time-occupying and attention-attracting gadgets. The regulars' address books featured typical literary salons whose main purpose was presenting to the audiences the most recent output of its hostess (or, less frequently, host) and of their befriended men-of-the-quill. The most important, and longest-held, were the *monżur*s ('*mon-jours*') held by 'Deotyma' – Jadwiga Łuszczewska, the poetess and improviser, who in the forties was an attraction in the salon of her mother Nina; after the Insurrection and her return from exile (where she voluntarily accompanied her father), she ran for a few dozen years a popular salon of her own, in a house at the intersection of Marszałkowska and Królewska Street. Her receptions were stage-managed according to the Versailles court audience model: surrounded by her admirers, the hostess read her works aloud; the guests listened in silence, muttering in approval from time to time. "A moment of illusionary freedom – at the price of carefully hidden sheer boredom", a frequenter remarked sneeringly.[40]

The other such meetings were hosted by other men or women of letters. Stanisław Kossakowski, an heir-in-tail and a philanthropist passionately fond of

40 Wacław Rogowicz, *Warszawa wydarta niepamięci* ['Warsaw snatched from oblivion'], Kraków 1956, p. 133). Still, these '*monżur*s' were also referred to as 'the Commonwealth miniatured' (cf. Jadwiga Kopeć, *Dziecko dawnej Warszawy* ['A child of the Warsaw of yore'], Warszawa 1963, p. 79).

heraldry, would give, in the seventies, literary soirées attracting some two hundred attendees at a time, among whom 'old press' exponents were predominant. Świętochowski, Kotarbiński and other guests at Kossakowski's place spared no acrimonious remarks to those meetings, criticising their intellectual futility and the non-attendance of beautiful and witty ladies (as a denizen noted down in 1876, this manorial lord was visited by "190 individuals, male alone, like in a wood"[41]).

There were some ten musical salons where concerts were given and listened to; their role was essential, given the fact that a normal philharmonic was set up in Warsaw only in 1901. Other salons were run by well-known painters (for example Wojciech Gerson). There were typical publishers' salons, usually grouping together contributors of a single editorial office or firm. Among the most important receptions of this sort were those held at the homes of: Edward Leo, the editor of *Gazeta Polska*; Antoni Pietkiewicz (Adam Pług), the editor of Kłosy; Aleksandra Borkowska, the founder of *Kronika Rodzinna* ('Sundays' attended by Catholic activists and dignitaries, creating an "ultra-Catholic climate"); Fella (Felicja) Kaftalowa[*], a journalist with *Kurier Poranny*; Adam Wiślicki, who received those representing the 'young press'; and finally, members of great Warsaw publishers' families: Lewental, Gebethner and Wolff. People also met in some editorial offices, on a regular basis or once in a blue moon – especially at Wóycicki's *Biblioteka Warszawska* and Szymanowski's *Kurier*: "the merry *Kurier* carousals" were once famous across Warsaw. Many such meetings were later portrayed in their participants' memoirs; these descriptions, full of vivid, sometimes ribald anecdotes, environmental observations, reports on the beverages and meals served, invited guests, conversation topics and toasts raised, are today a unique source for researching the fascinating and complex mosaic made up by the life of the intellectual elites in the Warsaw of the 2nd half of the 19th century.

Obviously, there were salons attracting representatives of a profession or attendees sharing a passion, or origin. Among the many, 'Tuesdays' at Maria Ilnicka's place were frequented by female contributors to *Bluszcz* as well as older-generation writers and *Sybirak*s settled in Warsaw. These meetings were quite specific with their patriotic purism of extreme absurdity: the hostess was intolerant about anything related to Russia or Russian things – thus, for instance, banning cigarettes as they were imported to Poland from the East. Władysław Bogusławski, theatrical critic and former deportee, grandson of the famous

41 Kajetan Kraszewski, *Silva rerum. Kronika domowa. Wspomnienia i zapiski dzienne z lat 1830-1881* ['*Silva rerum*. A home chronicle. Memories and daily notes, 1830-81'], opr. Z. Sudolski, Warszawa 2000, s. 427.

Wojciech, predominantly hosted men of letters and men of the theatre – particularly, contributors to *Biblioteka Warszawska*. Piotr Chmielowski received and served wine to a friendly circle of debaters, Świętochowski, Sygietyński and Dygasiński at the spearhead, along with *Ateneum* journalists. Jan Karłowicz and his aristocratic wife entertained the landed-gentry and intelligentsia elite at their patrician salon on Chmielna Street, and then in Jasna Street; concerts were held as part of these meetings too. Similarly variegated were the soirées hosted by Ludwik Górski or Prince Jan-Tadeusz Lubomirski. The latter, also a once-deportee (to no further than Nizhniy-Novgorod), was a historian and publisher, a merited social activist and, for many years, the chairman of the Warsaw Charity Society.

Cyclical meetings were organised by representatives of scientific disciplines who were offered no room in the aulae of the Russian Imperial University of Warsaw. Thus, historians and penmen found an ersatz of a scholarly seminar at the house of Tadeusz Korzon (a Lithuanian by origin, who settled in Warsaw in 1869) and of the Varsovians Stanisław Krzemiński and Stosław Łaguna; lawyers met at Adolf Suligowski's; mathematicians, at the homes of Samuel Dickstein or Stanisław Krysiński. (The latter, a practising gynaecologist, gave his guests advice in this other respect too; for instance, the linguist Jan Baudouin de Courtenay and the philosopher Wincenty Lutosławski attended "a special course in the physiology of the sexes he delivered at his place, extending to everything a father expecting his issue ought to be aware of".) Linguists would visit Jan Karłowicz; philosophers, religious scholars and people interested in the progress of the humanities were received by Ignacy Radliński. Organisers of such meetings acted with complete awareness in an attempt at rescuing what could be rescued in the face of the progressing Russification. Their motives were articulated by Suligowski, the lawyer, who wrote: "We started in 1877, influenced by the heavy blow inflicted on our country as foreign courts-of-law entered, with their foreign language and alien judiciary".[42]

Apart from their obvious socialising function, all these enumerated salons additionally served as centres for the exchange of thoughts and opinions, community or public-spirited initiatives, the formation of collective attitudes and behaviours toward the current challenges, with even the very distant objectives in mind, often not expressed out loud. What is more, the Warsaw of that era had also salons which, with general consent, played the role of *sui generis* public meetings – in that their attendees influenced the political options of Poles,

42 Adolf Suligowski, *Z ciężkich lat. Mowy* ['From the hard times. Orations'], Kraków 1905, p. 71.

designated the boundaries of the compromise in relations with the partitioning authority, and dictated the code of behaviour of Polish intellectuals, writers and scholars. Such was, primarily, the role of the meetings organised by the two outstanding physicians, Ignacy Baranowski and Karol Benni, as well as of the 'Tuesdays' of Aleksander Kraushar and his wife Jadwiga, née Bersohn, or the 'teas' of the journalist Dionizy Henkiel.

The Kraushars' salon on Senatorska Street was one of the most eclectic foci of Warsaw's intellectual life: albeit it gathered in scientists, writers, journalists and artists of the older generation, in the first place, but "Jews and Catholics, backwards and liberals, millionaires and the indigent all visited the place, in a word: fire and water combined, all this maintained by the hosts in […] a perfect balance"[43].

The meetings at Dionizy Henkiel's modest dwelling in an annex building above the stables on Mokotowska Street were of a completely different sort. The host, a columnist, writer, member of the *Gazeta Polska* editorial board, and an exile before then, spoke with a broad Lithuanian accent, lisping – his apparition, as Ludwik Krzywicki could remember him, being one "of a good-natured old man whom no one would have suspected of having once been a secretary to Traugutt[44], and, of being one of the most influential, though quiescent, organisers of the literary life of Warsaw, and even beyond its limits. Not only of a literary life!" During his parties, where only tea was drunk, and which earned the name of the "Inspirational Institute", a "hotbed of talents, literary confessional and a laboratory", or, "audiences at the Dalai Lama's", writers were formed and created with a thought that they could serve Polish society to the best of their capacities. Numerous testimonies confirm Henkiel's influence on the thematic scope, final form, and even titles, of works written by Henryk Sienkiewicz, Bolesław Prus or the popular historian Szymon Askenazy. As Krzywicki put it, "He considered it his social obligation to mould publicists, novelists and historians out of raw material."

Characteristic about the receptions held by Dr Baranowski and Dr Benni was their deep involvement in politics – in the current conciliatory policies as well

43 Eliza Orzeszkowa, *Listy zebrane*, ed. by E. Jankowski, vol. 6, Wrocław 1967, p. 86.

44 In reality, Henkiel never acted as a secretary to Traugutt; he did join the Insurrection in the Ukraine, was detained while transporting the arms, and sentenced to six years of heavy labour in Eastern Siberia. When in exile, he was outstandingly careful about his yoke-fellows: he delivered lectures to them, covering various areas of knowledge, and edited an illegal periodical *Ogniwo*. In 1870, he was allowed to settle down in Warsaw.

as in the much wider-ranging, and free from everyday determinants, policies aimed at preventing the denationalisation of Polish people, and at defending Polish culture, science and language from surrender, neutralisation, and lifelessness. They were called "the Polish *sejm* in Warsaw", "the Warsaw *sommitée*" (Baranowski's own concept), "the Warsaw parliament", a "noiseless *sejm*", a place where "the capital city's intellectualism", "all the vivid individuals", "all that could sense things in a keen manner", "the whole intelligent world" (Benni) gathered. Both salons, particularly at the 'Fridays' Karol Benni organised over the course of forty years, a great number of educational, cultural and political initiatives were taken and implemented – from the construction of the building of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts or the Adam Mickiewicz Monument, up to the decision to boycott people and attitudes acknowledged as unworthy of a Pole of the era of captivity.

> At Karol Benni's, there usually gathered [people of] literature and the arts, but all the acts and thoughts that were generated by the place occurred, in my understanding, in a conspiratorial and, at the same time, an oddly nameless, fashion; the host's undeniable talent and the zealous devotion with which he tackled the social work have concentrated the singular efforts into organised action. You would enter his apartment using a side entrance, one person at a time, never in groups, because of the fear of the police.
> Edward Krasiński, *Gawędy o przedwojennej Warszawie* ['Drawn-out stories about the pre-war Warsaw'], Warszawa 1936, p. 64.

The end of the eighteenth century and the whole of the nineteenth century can, for many reasons, be regarded as the era of salons. The collective manifestation and experiencing of the most important intellectual and artistic trends of the era was characteristic of many European nations and cultures, pre-Revolutionary France coming chronologically first. In Polish lands, the institution of the salon was equally stable and important. The salons of Warsaw in the second half of the 19th century drew on the tradition of the era of King Stanislaus Augustus and the 1840s, and at the same time found their imitators in the provincial towns of Congress Poland, wherever the intelligentsia stratum was developed well enough to create a network of reciprocal relations, mutual understanding and intellectual stimulation. Salons were also seminal in the life of the elites of Krakow and Lwów (which was referred to before). However, the distinctive feature of the Warsaw intelligentsia's social life in that time was its public dimension, its conscious striving to transpose the meeting of friends – a phenomenon which was of its very nature private, or even intimate – to the sphere of collective life. The public life of Russian Poles after 1863 had to remain private; the border between the private and the public was the more blurred the stronger the boundary between what was Polish and foreign, one's own and hostile.

> Social opinion was conceived and emanated from private social meetings. […] The life of this apparently merry *Varsovian circle*, which in reality was a battleground where the battle against the tsarist oppression was fought in pursuance of the nation's existence, created a peculiar educational climate of Warsaw, on that fertilised the incomer's spirit, inciting him to take initiative and action. It propelled the pace of the city's life, its characteristic temper, enabling to discern a Varsovian from an inhabitant of another Polish town. […] The works […] many a time consistently ensued one from the other, forming a chain of mutually akin issues the society had to tackle in replacement of its own non-existing state. […] Significantly, when the sound organism of a nation encounters conditions depriving it of its natural organs indispensable for existing culturally, it then creates replacement organs, *people-institutions*. It often happens that a single human is an entire institution, doing what under a free nation's normal conditions of living is a task of a dedicated organisation.
> *Stanisława Michalskiego autobiografia i działalność oświatowa* ['Stanisław Michalski: his autobiography and activities in the field of education'], ed. by H. Radlińska, I. Lepalczyk, Wrocław 1967, pp. 225-226, 256-257.

Beginning with the mid-1880s, the intellectual and political map of Warsaw features new foci of thought and action: new editorial offices, private apartments, and coffee-houses, en vogue among young people. The new generation made natural use of their predecessors' experiences; however, they also revolutionised Polish public life. Anticipating our further considerations, let us quote the example of Stanisław Michalski (1865-1949), an extremely merited educational activist who from the late 1880s held his own Friday 'teas' which were called – this time, by the new generation of frequenters, adepts and beneficiaries – "the first initiation and retreat", "a school of awakening, propagating and developing of creative scientific work among the Polish youth", "one of the major centres of cultural labours" in Warsaw. Leaving aside, for the time being, any differences between Michalski's generation and the preceding generations of the 'old press' and the 'new press', the category, defined by him, of people-institutions living and acting in the partition realities after 1870 deserves a mention.

Michalski would see among them Bolesław Hirszfeld, Cecylia Śniegocka and Mieczysław Brzeziński, all of whom will be referred to in more detail below, along with Stefania Sempołowska, Ludwik Krzywicki, Jadwiga Szczawińska-Dawidowa, Maria Gomólińska and, lastly, S. Michalski. Yet, 'people-institutions' also operated in the Main School generation. The contribution made by Świętochowski and Orzeszkowa, Chmielowski and Prus, in view of a continued existence and development of Polish culture is not to be overestimated. This exercise was successfully brought about not only by their intellectual effort, by their ability to take long views and tackle daily tasks, but also by their own industrious efforts across the domains of Polish public life after the January Insurrection's

defeat. Others followed them or marched hand in hand with them, whilst others still, oftentimes unjustly forgotten today, testified with their personal effort – so many of them when involved in the uprising, deported and, especially, in the later years of calamity – to an astonishing indestructibility and vitality of Polishness. Henkiel, Baranowski and Benni served as 'individuals/institutions' of Poles under bondage. Aleksander Kraushar and Samuel Dickstein, both assimilated Jews, the former a Catholic and the latter an atheist, had enormous merits to their credit both in terms of the development of the domains of science they cultivated and for the stimulation of intellectual life in general. Adam Pług (Antoni Pietkiewicz), a second-rank writer and first-rank editor of, inter alia, *The Great Universal Illustrated Encyclopaedia* (*Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna Ilustrowana*), was an "unequalled model of ideal man", in the view of his contemporaries; an individual "living by love alone, and by devotion alone"; or even, "half-a-caricature, half-a-relic". Ignacy Radliński, a scholar and erudite, was reported by his daughter, breathing with a sense of grievance, to have "drowned in the intellect, and detached himself from a practical life", whilst for his associates he was a real Epicurus drawing delight from intellectual work, from the imaginativeness of his creative thought". Stanisław Krzemiński, another erudite, gifted with a photographic memory, was described as a man of "an odd, exactitude-loving mind, stuffed with figures and facts"[45], which he shared with editorial teams of several Warsaw periodicals and publishing houses, and with a vast group of his comrades and associates.

To expand this list beyond the Partitions' boundaries, the Galicians Józef Szujski, Michał Bobrzyński, Adrian Baraniecki (a Podolian of origin), Stanisław Pareński, Wiktor Baworowski and Józef Białynia Chołodecki, the latter two dwelling in Lwów, should definitely be mentioned. These 'individuals-institutions' organised the Polish element also in the Prussian Partition, albeit the most influential ones among them – the Rev. Piotr Wawrzyniak and the landholder Maksymilian Jackowski, inspirers of the farmers' circles movement, or Ignacy Laskowski, another landowner, and the founder of the Scientific Society in Toruń – were not of an intelligentsia background. Nonetheless, among the key educational and economic activists in Poznań were Karol Libelt, the philosopher; Hipolit Cegielski, an ex-pedagogue and scholar and subsequently a factory-owner; Roman Szymański, a political activist and columnist, and the editor of the daily *Orędownik* (from 1871); or, Marceli Motty, a journalist and chronicler of Poznań life: all of them contributed to the ranks of the otherwise

45 Stanisław Stempowski, *Pamiętniki* ['Memoirs'], Wrocław 1953, p. 228.

scarce intelligentsia of Wielkopolska, even though their own social background was other than intelligentsia-related.

All of those individuals were great in their peculiar way, and greatly merited; yet, their actual intellectual potential was never fully used, and none of them earned a scientific or professional position or stance he (or she) could have attained if belonging to a free, affluent and appreciated nation. They no doubt looked forward and reached high – but remained bound to their 'there and then' all the same, doomed to move within the limits of the sad Polish realities of the post-1863-4 defeat. And they indeed could seem weird, parochial – admirable perhaps, but impenetrable; impressive but irritating – in the perception of external observers and of those of the next generation: this was the way Krzemiński was seen by Józef Dąbrowski ('Grabiec'), a socialist activist younger by a generation. "His languid stature of a prematurely aged, shy and typical *practical slouch*, incapable of handling things and the enormousness of his knowledge and character, and his past [Krzemiński was a member of the National Government in 1863], were so disproportionate!", and made Grabiec so cross. "[…] If you could find a symbol of the severest tragedy of Post-Partition Poland – that loneliness of patriotism of action; that break-up of the national spirit which was characteristic, especially, to the generations of the last years of the 19th century – then Stanisław Krzemiński was a number-one such symbol."[46]

It is essential and worth emphasising that all the initiatives the Polish intelligentsia undertook over the dozen-or-so years after the fall of the January Insurrection were completely legal actions, always sanctioned with the acquiescence of the partitioner authorities. Such legalism was quite obvious for Galicia, where reforms opened, in the course a few years, the field for normal political, educational and scientific work. Apart from the secret ministry of the Catholic clergy in the Kulturkampf era and from the youth circles, in a later time, most economic, mutual-aid and educational initiatives undertaken in the Prussian Partition were also legal. The local animators of such actions had incessantly to break the resistance of the Prussian state machinery, but the rigidity of laws and regulations paradoxically became an ally to the Poles in their combat in defence of the national prerogatives: in Wielkopolska, as opposed to the Russian Partition, one could challenge (true, with an uncertain outcome) the police bans, confiscations and chicaneries by the means of legal court proceedings.

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46 Józef Dąbrowski ('Grabiec'), *Czerwona Warszawa przed ćwierć wiekiem. Moje wspomnienia* ['The Red Warsaw quarter a century ago. My memoirs'], Poznań 1925, pp. 198-199.

No such option was possible for the subjects of the Russian Empire where no appeal was allowed against the decision of a censor, police-master (*spravnik*) or *tchinovnik* in office; bribing remained the only method of 'dialoguing' with the authorities – and was admittedly taken advantage of a great deal. The shade of the defeated Insurrection and the brutality of repression meant that, actually, all the undertakings hitherto described did not cross the border of legality. In exchange, the Russian Partition's intelligentsia developed a whole system of behaviours and signs which enabled one to bypass the limitations and to communicate with society in spite of the superimposed gags and bonds. In a country where it was impossible to obtain consent for the legalisation of a scientific association, a fund was set up named after a scholar who was not objected to by the authorities (Mianowski) and, once approved, became an area of activities reaching far beyond mutual aid functions. Columnists and writers who were not allowed to write about Poland, the homeland or independence, developed a new language, a peculiar Aesopian speech which was understood by readers while not giving the censor a reason to interfere: thus, one would write of a "love of the mother" or "merits for the country", when dedication and services for the homeland were meant; or, periphrases were used to flag the Insurrection and exile-related past of individuals such as Wokulski, the central character of B. Prus's *The Doll*. Writers would situate their narratives' plots in a remote past, in order to teach, chastise or invigorate their contemporaries in an exotic setting. This conventional game that involved the authorities was joined by almost everybody, including those who did not believe in a possibility of regaining their own country in a foreseeable future, and saw in the conciliatory gestures a hope for concessions for Polish culture and language. The actors included even – or, perhaps, primarily – people such as Ignacy Baranowski, who in the nineties was a mainstay of the Warsaw conciliation faction; Karol Benni, among whose patients was Alexandra Teodorovna, Tsar Nicholas II's wife; Włodzimierz Spasowicz, who edited one of the most intellectually interesting and most liberal magazines of his time; and, finally, Henryk Sienkiewicz, often reasonably tackling subjects unable to arouse the distrust of the censors, and who was almost idolised by his readers for the innumerable moments of affection, reasons for national pride, evocative encouragement to persevere and amend he provided them with. That omnipresent ambiguity, if not evasiveness, certainly distorted the psyche of Polish creative artists and the recipients of their works in the era of bondage. On the other hand, however, it did stimulate inventiveness and imagination – and helped develop, in the first place, extremely strong bonds of mutual understanding between the author and the circle of his/her loyal readers: an experience rarely faced by the literature of countries luckily doing without a system of signs, orders and punishments.

With all that, the Polish intelligentsia of the latter half of the 19th century, consistently ignoring and avoiding the alien power, ready to oppose it more or less openly or, conversely, entering into diverse relations and interdependencies with it, shaped a modern patriotism, whose aspects, though mutually contradictory, remained obligatory for the Polish nation for the following 150-or-so years. In spite of any inconsistencies, fluctuations and Partition-dependent differences, not only did the Polish intellectual elites manage to elaborate and impose a code of recommendations and barriers determining Polish society's attitude toward the partitioning powers but they also implemented a peculiar penitentiary system to ensure the observance of this code. The many years of bondage obviously enforced a whole variety of contacts and associations with the partitioner states' apparatuses, in Galicia, as autonomous as it was, this symbiosis was the most advanced, and the social acquiescence for it the broadest. But there the limit was set. The intellectual elites of the second half of the century had a decisive say in boycotting the individuals, companies or periodicals which crossed that 'unwritten' boundary – in the Russian Partition; in 'blacklisting' the landowners who sold their estates to Germans – in the Prussian Partition; and, in the derisive attitude toward the '*Schwarzgelb*-ism', a neologism describing limitless loyalism toward the black-and-yellow Habsburg flag. Their exhortations proved oftentimes contrary to the economic and political realities of their time, sometimes meeting no response at all. It was nonetheless to their merit that Polish people preserved their sense of a national community over the more-than-120 years of territorial division, rejecting, all in all, the very real and realistic, quite reasonable and no less promising temptations of moral capitulation.

The years following 1870 also marked a period when Polish intellectuals: writers, publicists, and scientists set the limits for their own behaviours and utterances, beyond which any thought or verbal expression would entail the odium of a national apostasy. The conviction that marking such limits was necessary was especially reinforced in 1872 – the one-hundredth anniversary of the First Partition, and the date that a hope for political change in Europe was let down. The fruit it bore was the three notorious appeals to quit the hope for an independent Poland and to become molten in Russianness instead – and, thereby, in Slavdom as a whole. All the three authors publishing their thoughts at that time: the popular writer Michał Czajkowski (Sadyk Pasza), the Rev. Karol Mikoszewski, the former activist with the Reds in the January Insurrection, and Kazimierz Krzywicki, the columnist and former associate of Aleksander Wielopolski, were professional penmen who had many times before then expressed their opinions on various public topics, representing a variety of ideological options. By then,

they had grown convinced about the irreversible nature of the fall of Poland and the need to quit one's own nationality in the name of perseverance and a future revival in a family of Slavonic nations.

Krzywicki's book *Polska i Rosja w 1872 r.* ['Poland and Russia in 1872'] strongly reverberated at home and in the emigrant community. Its author had once contributed to Margrave Wielopolski's educational reforms, and was a co-founder of the Main School. Ten years after those achievements, he posed the farthest-reaching postulates to the Poles: finally and completely erase any hope for an autonomous national existence; reject the Catholic faith and the mother tongue; and, become irrevocably integrated with Russia, so as to finally become thereby purified and reborn within Slavdom.

The programme advocated by Krzywicki and those of his ilk was condemned in concert by the conservatives, democrats, Positivists, and even by the doves. Spasowicz named it no less than a 'suicidal policy', and the other critics took a similar stance. In parallel, the disputants grew at that moment trenchantly aware of the problem of the author's responsibility for the words s/he utters and for the moment at which a 'mental deviation' transforms into a national apostasy. Accusations of treason and apostasy were abused in the ongoing political struggle over the entire Partition period, but it was only Krzywicki's call for abandoning the Catholic faith and the Polish language that caused the disputers to indisputably label its originator a traitor. In this way, the final boundaries were set beyond which no Pole of the bondage era was ever supposed to cross, whether by means of their individual choice or via an intellectual concept they might have come up with.

Individual instances of quitting Polishness by educated people were stigmatised in quite a similar way, particularly if entailing identification with the specific partitioner's national option. Tadeusz Bułharyn, or Faddei Bulgarin, the already-mentioned Russian-language writer and police agent, considered by himself and by the Polish milieu to be an ex-Pole, served as the most frequently evoked negative example throughout the nineteenth century. The case of Włodzimierz Antonowicz (Volodymyr Antonovych) was disputed during and after the January Insurrection. As a Kiev University student, he joined the Polish youth's conspiratorial organisation but afterwards declared the severance of his links with Polishness and with the nobility caste, determining himself as a Ukrainian and converting to Orthodoxy. He subsequently published numerous works on archaeology and the history of the Ukraine, in Russian, thus pioneering the Ukrainian intellectual movement in the Russian Empire area. He took a professorship with the St. Vladimir University in 1878. By Polish perception, he became a renegade who, "has betrayed his own homeland, religion and nationality,

[…] thereby straightaway deducting the trait of integrity, independence, and disinterestedness of the work of his entire life"[47]. Quite similar opinions were targeted at those educated émigrés who lost their Polish identity when in foreign lands, and identified themselves instead with their country of settlement. The career of Joseph Conrad as an English-language writer triggered severe criticism, as was already pointed out.

The temperature of the debate on national conversion grew even higher at the beginning of the twentieth century, the time the national movements expanded in the former Commonwealth territory, especially in the Ukraine and Lithuania, and in Silesia too. Rejections of Polish identity became more frequent in that period, in some cases dramatically breaking apart friendly and family bonds. Famous were the choices made by people such as: the Polish aristocrat Roman Szeptycki, who was elected the Ukrainian Uniate metropolitan bishop of Lwów (his brother Stanisław was the commander of the 3rd Brigade of the Polish Legions and then a general with the Army of the Second Republic); Stanisław Narutowicz, the brother of the first President of the revived Poland, who chose to be a Lithuanian and was a member of the Lithuanian parliament (from 1917-18); or, Józef Kożdoń, the founder of the Silesian Peasants' Party, who advocated national autonomy for the Cieszyn Silesia people. All of them were stigmatised by the Polish community, especially whenever quitting one's Polish identity had anything to do with proactively supporting national or state-related aspirations other than Polish ones. The contrary phenomenon, that is, individual instances of conversion to Polishness by educated people who resolved to alter their national option at a mature age, by way of in-depth intellectual reflexion, came across a friendly response, without much emotion or doubt triggered around them. Albert von Winkler (1838-1918) was probably the best known such convert. Born to a completely Germanised Pomeranian family, he discovered and recognised his Polish background at the age of twenty-plus, and eventually became – as Wojciech Kętrzyński – a merited Polish historian and the director of the Ossolineum institute in Lwów. And even if the people around him at times criticised his imperfect pronunciation, his right to identify himself as a Pole was never called into question. The reverse was the case with the assimilating Jews whose phonetic or grammatical errors of any sort tended to be ruthlessly ridiculed.

47 Franciszek Rawita-Gawroński, *Włodzimierz Antonowicz. Zarys jego działalności społeczno-politycznej i historycznej* ['W.A. An outline of his social-political and historical activities'], Lwów 1912, p. 7.

4. The self-stereotype of the Polish intelligentsia in the 2nd half of the 19th century

The few dozen years between the fall of the January Insurrection and the beginning of the new century was marked, among other things, by the Polish intelligentsia extremely clearly identifying its autonomous position in society, the vertiginous requirements posed to it by the reality, as well as its own concentrated powers useful in meeting the challenge – in spite of any political or material shortages. Looking at themselves in the shiny sheets of mirrors, exponents of the intellectual elites of Warsaw, Krakow and Lwów, and of provincial towns, willingly used pompous phrases and vivid metaphors. In reference to the entire stratum and its merited representatives, descriptions such as the country's "brain and heart", "the flower of society", "a grand reservoir of the nation's vital powers", titans who "think with the nation in view", "natural leaders of society", people "marching in the leading ranks of Polish society", "guardians of the purity of national ideals", "stars", "firebrands incessantly shedding light for kind human labours", "the torches of our knowledge and our intellectual output", "the priests of science", "the priests of the nation's spiritual temple", "the propagators", and the like, were proliferating. The intelligentsia who after 1870 identified themselves for the most part with the Positivist programme of patience and labour, thought of themselves and described themselves in a thoroughly romanticist fashion, deeming the efforts they undertook to be a complementation of the Romanticist 'thunderous deeds', even though the measures they used differed now as to quality.

The purpose behind those efforts was uniform, commonly understood and accepted: public weal. With a nation deprived of its state, the intelligentsia takes responsibility for its present and its future: for survival of its science and culture as well as for the daily down-to-earth weal of ordinary people, living in poverty, uneducated, full of irrational superstitions and fears. The sense of a mission with respect to society is common to the luminaries and the workers who are nameless the moment they die. The obituaries of Warsaw intellectuals from 1863-72, as investigated by Ryszarda Czepulis-Rastenis, propagated a body of virtues and merits that representatives of the entire stratum ought to have been crowned with. The list includes in-depth professional training based upon higher education, often complemented by a professional traineeship with a Western European university; love for one's own scientific domain and for science at large; more importantly, readiness to devote all one's powers to the good of the nation; rejection of worldly possessions and personal happiness; indefatigable activity, in spite of any adversities, dejections affecting the spirit and weaknesses of the

body. Regardless of the extent to which this ideal model of the Polish intellectual was actually delivered in practice, its postulates, summarised as above, expressed a collective conviction about what an educated Pole of the second half of the 19th century ought to be like, for whom and in what ways he should act. Characteristically, this inventory of the virtues of white-collar workers of the Positivist era does not deviate much, in some respects, from the romanticist model of the national hero; the postulates of workmanship and competency, assiduity in action, and personal modesty are the peculiarly 'intellectual' traits. This catalogue of virtues was meant to be common to the great and lesser workers of the national realm, their merits being the same, taken all round: "The field of merits is extensive; whoever has cultivated therein but a single ridge or field-patch, deserved has he a grateful memory."[48]

> Chmielowski the writer has erected a monument of himself through his works; had, however, Chmielowski the man found his own Plutarch, his life could have become a model for the posterity to follow, and, 'Behold, the model citizen!' would be said of him in the later generations. […] …he wouldn't know how to rest on one's laurels: work was his element, the imperative of his life.
> Tadeusz Pini, *Piotr Chmielowski. Wspomnienie pośmiertne* ['Piotr Chmielowski. A posthumous reminiscence'], Lwów 1904, pp. 15, 24.

As time progressed, illusions that the efforts of columnists, social activists, scientists and teachers would lead to the dream degree of enlightenment and welfare gradually vanished and a tone of doubt crept into the expressions. Both the leading ideologists of Warsaw Positivism and ordinary activists, especially in the provinces, were affected by surrender and disbelief. The farther the distance from the intellectual and cultural centres, the more difficult it was to live and, especially, to act and believe that one's individual efforts might change and shape life. This experience of sadness of out-of-the-way locality was common to the provincial intellectuals of all three Partitions. Since the early 1880s, the press and belles-lettres works abounded with descriptions of exhaustion and paralysis to which parochialism, poverty, a sense of debility, and cynicism condemned all those who had arrived to a hinterland area with a will and hope of change for the better. In spite of all this, it seems that the first generation of Polish intellectuals after the defeat of the January Insurrection – the generation of young Positivists, along with the old traditionalists, conservatives, liberals, Ultramontanes,

48 Kazimierz Władysław Wóycicki, *Samuel Orgelbrand*, in: *Kłosy*, 1868, no. 179 (quoted after: Ryszarda Czepulis-Rastenis, *Ludzie nauki i talentu* ['People of science and talents'], p. 306, footnote 9).

advocates of conciliation, cynics, or even those who had already survived, jeered and lost everything, declaring a lack of interest in any programme or idea – unanimously entertained their pride of membership in their social stratum and a belief in its potential. In this sense, the second half of the nineteenth century – the period when the Polish intelligentsia had to struggle with political repressions following from the armed defeat and with the economic crises emerging out of the new, capitalist labour market – was the intelligentsia's golden age, one in which their hopes, intentions, destinies, and even their measurable potentials were placed higher than ever before or after.

Chapter 5: At the century's turn

All the strivings in the social, economic, cultural and scientific fields, which over the two decades after the fall of the January Insurrection the 'organic workers' were undertaking in Warsaw or Poznań, were characterised by a thoroughly immaculate legalism, as I emphasised earlier. A vast portion of the activists' energy was absorbed by multi-volume, burdensome efforts to gain acceptance for their initiatives from the invader state's authorities, often resorting to juridical equilibristic and at the price of concessions. However, pessimism emerged at a rather early stage, and grew stronger and stronger over time, as to whether the legal steps, with their limited range, were capable of stimulating the development of Polish culture and science under the rule of the Romanov and Hohenzollern dynasties, or at least, of maintaining its identity and coherence. Were they able to maintain and broaden Polish national awareness among the lower social strata, in the face of the fact that schools of all tiers had Russian or German as the language of instruction, and the teaching was in the spirit of admiration for the ruling monarchs? Were they capable of ensuring inter-Partition contacts intensive enough for Poles to preserve the awareness of their unity from before the Partitions? And, lastly, could they withhold the recession of Polishness, as visible particularly in the eastern and western peripheries of the Polish cultural area, in the emigration clusters, and also in the country's great industrial cities where miserable workers' quarters were proliferating, and the old traditions fading? This doubt was already encountered by the first generation of Positivists; and it was they who undertook the first, hesitant attempts at changing the methods of action.

It was around 1870 that private dwellings of post-January Warsaw set the stage for secret meetings of readers of the Galician and the Poznań press, as well as the West-European press. These readings revealed the appearance of a disturbing phenomenon of the shortage of articles on the Kingdom in the Galician press, and no Polish motifs present at all in European magazines. This situation was not fundamentally changed as *Listy do przyjaciółki* ['Letters to her female friend'] by a certain Baroness XYZ (written in fact by journalist Antoni Zaleski), describing the social relations in Warsaw, were published in 1881 in a Krakow daily. A secret society set up by outstanding Warsaw scholars and writers in late 1887, mostly known as the Literary Society, set for itself much more ambitious plans.

The Society was initiated by Jan Karłowicz, and was joined by individuals associated, in most cases, with the editorial board of *Prawda*, who set as a goal for themselves to preserve the supra-Partition communications in a situation where the flow of news through the frontiers of the Russian Partition was becoming increasingly inhibited. The intended way to achieve this was publishing permanent reports published in the Poznań and Krakow press, each prepared by all the participants and then smuggled through the cordon. The subsequent meetings of the conspiratorial team were usually held at the house of Józef Natanson, where the contents of the articles were discussed by the attendees.

The first publication in the series was the letters *Z pod zaboru rosyjskiego* ['From the Russian Partition'], edited by Antoni-Gustaw Bem, a journalist and a teacher, and published until December 1891 in *Dziennik Poznański*. In the wake of them, the brochures were produced: *Z domu niewoli* ['From the house of bondage'] (the first, authored by Aleksander Świętochowski, was issued in Lwów in 1889, the subsequent ones were written by Samuel Dickstein and Władysław Smoleński, among others); *Listy z zaboru rosyjskiego* ['Letters from the Russian Partition'], edited by Stanisław Krzemiński (published until 1901 in the Krakow daily *Nowa Reforma*); Krzemiński's *Dwadzieścia pięć lat Rosji w Polsce (1863-1888)* ['Twenty-five years of Russia in Poland, 1863-88'] (1892); and, a two-volume history of the Polish nation *Dzieje narodu polskiego* penned by Smoleński, funded by Natanson, and published, under a pseudonym, in 1897 in Krakow. The Society's activity was in the late 19th century the only such wide-ranging action informing the Polish public on the situation in the Russian Partition; one contemporary researcher called it outright a 'conspiratorial *press agency*' that fulfilled its tasks consistently and efficiently.

Publications behind the cordon were not the only form of illegal activity that the Warsaw Positivists willy-nilly resolved to undertake. The Russification in low-grade school instruction enforced the undertaking of undercover educational initiatives. Even a confirmed legalist like doctor Ignacy Baranowski initiated in the seventies, in his own apartment, a sort of small training college for female teachers, who were prepared for a dozen-or-so years for educational activity in the national spirit. The 'Fridays', held over almost the entire period in question at Karol Benni's, teetered, as has been said, on the edge of legality, often crossing the boundary.

1. The anti-Positivistic breakthrough; socialism and nationalism

The fundamental breakthrough occurred, however, in the 1880s, particularly in the decade's second half. Its late years brought along deep changes in

consciousness which erased the relative unity of the attitudes represented by Poles, bringing about at the beginning of the following century a final polarisation of postures for the Polish intelligentsia. The period was, after all, critical not only for Poland and its intelligentsia in a body, but also for the whole Europe which at that time was going through an anti-positivistic and anti-scientistic reversal. It proved decisive for the direction and the forms of the future development of all the domains of culture, Polish as well as European. New currents emerged in literature, which, following the period of dominant naturalism, eventually led to a modernistic revolution, which in our lands was called the Young Poland movement. Polish historians of literature consider the year 1891 to be the epoch's conventional start date – it was then that three poets of the new generation: Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, Franciszek Nowicki and Andrzej Niemojewski made their debuts. The first achievements of young historians, deemed afterwards to have been a neo-Romanticist breakthrough in Polish historiography, took place in that same period. Revolutionary changes in the contents and forms of visual arts started taking place in the eighties.

In the first place, however, a radical transformation demolished the nineteenth-century vision of the world, affecting almost all the realms of social life, shaping a new attitude toward man and collectives or social systems formed by humans, toward nations and social classes, religions, the past and the future humanity was meant to seek. The result was the emergence of some qualitatively new ideological currents endeavouring to comprehensively describe the world and man, and of novel mass-scale political movements, especially socialism and nationalism. The intensity of this transformation was reinforced by the fact that in the mid-1880s, public activity was taken up by a new generation of the intelligentsia, unburdened with the memory of defeat from the January Insurrection, and particularly sensitive to the inconsistencies of the Positivistic programme begotten in its shade.

In the socialist and nationalist approach, the subject of history was two collectives, described in a modern way: the people, or folk, deprived until then of a voice and disenfranchised, and nation, understood as a *sui generis* ethnic community. But the first ideologists and pioneers of party-related activity of both groups were members of the intelligentsia – the layer that in the new description of the world was to play a secondary role, if this role has not been negated at all. It is symptomatic that the role of the 'elders' of Polish socialism and the national movement, in its old, romanticist form, was assigned to two outstanding intellectuals of the second half of the 19th century: Bolesław Limanowski (1835-1935), who formed the first socialist organisations, patronised the founding convention of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), a sociologist, a historian and a prolific

columnist; and, Zygmunt Miłkowski (1824-1915), the cofounder and the first chairman of the Polish League, an author of historical novels, and a man of authority for a few generations of independence activists. Also, Karol Lewakowski (1836-1912) can be placed beside those two figures: this Doctor of Laws, publicist, outstanding speaker and Galician political activist cofounded, in 1895, the Peasants' Party of Galicia, the first Polish peasant organisation. For the generation of those founding fathers, ideological differences, albeit important, were not yet insuperable, always giving way to the goal regarded by everyone as primary: to regain independence for Poland. The decades to follow marked a significant rearrangement of these priorities.

The change thus outlined grew apparent in a most profound and most dramatic manner in the Russian Partition. There were a number of determinants: as was mentioned, the intelligentsia stratum was the largest there and, moreover, gifted with the highest sense of their own identity and unique nature; on top of that, for at least two generations they had been implementing a more or less consistent community-work, or social, programme. Secondly, in spite of the obvious provincial character of Warsaw, viewed against the main – or even some secondary – centres of European thought, a tough political situation; material paucity, and internal divisions among the city's educated elite members, the most recent intellectual, scientific and cultural currents from the West arrived there at a relatively fast pace, and had relatively wide repercussions:

> … In Galicia and, in the first place, in the Congress Kingdom, a hot intellectual work has kindled, so that but a small nook be won for Poland in the overall intellectual development in the West, no more as an active driver of this development, and then, at least, by the desire not to *lag behind*, and remain versed in all those currents that were shaking Europe in those days. Only the Kingdom alone has been in step with the development of intellectuality in Europe – inasmuch as the disgraceful Russian censorship so allowed; Galicia followed it at a short breadth's distance, in its insidious and virulent struggle with the *Stańczyk*s – the Poznań Province was dormant – not even dreaming of rousing from that dreaming.
>
> Stanisław Przybyszewski, *Moi współcześni* ['My contemporaries'], Warszawa 1959, p. 275.

At last – possibly, the most significant circumstance – the latter half of the 19th century witnessed increasingly frequent and intensive contact between the Russian Partition youth and their Russian peers: at the university in Warsaw and, primarily, in the higher schools of Russia, bringing along and transplanting into their native soil the Russian slogans of the *Narodnik*s' movement and of the underground socialist circles. It is one of the paradoxes of the post-Partition history of Poland and its intelligentsia that in the period when withdrawing in the face of

Russian things and fighting against Russification formed the basic postulates of national policy, the young generation of Poles was particularly absorbent to the ideas and methods of acting coming over from the East.

The 1880s decade was a period of unprecedented intellectual ferment among the Russian Partition's youth. This was certainly a generational phenomenon, affecting young intellectuals and university-level as well as secondary-school students, among whom there were female intellectuals and schoolgirls – perhaps for the first time on such a scale. The generation that grew mature at that very time has at times been referred to as 'the mutineers' (borrowing the phrase from the famous Bohdan Cywiński book, 1971), or the '*Głos*-people' generation, after the period's most important magazine of a social, cultural and scientific bent, of those published in Warsaw.

The *Głos* weekly appeared from 1886 to 1905 (with intervals caused by censors' interventions), its influence being most important in the first period – i.e. until suspended by the authorities in 1894; its editors were Józef-Karol Potocki (pseudonym Marian Bohusz[49]) and Jan-Ludwik Popławski. The editorial committee's members and the group of authors associated with *Głos* claimed in their programme – inconsistent and incoherent as it was, though attractive in the eighties by its fresh and innovative character – the necessity to render the Polish common people (especially, rural folk) emancipated. The folk were seen as the core of the nation, a lair of the real, the unique and indomitable Polishness, the mainspring of history, and the hope for the future. This mythicised 'People' was juxtaposed with the higher-tier social strata: unsteady, frail, betraying their appropriate tasks, yielding to foreign (especially, Jewish) influence, alien to the people in civilisation terms, doomed to inevitable defeat. In lieu of the previous educated elites: the landlords and the intellectuals who served them, especially manorial officials, *Głos* postulated the education of a new generation of mental workers who would be engaged in social service. Their service was meant to bring about a cultural domination of country people, and a national revival as its consequence. In harmony with the glorification of the people, there appeared criticism of organic work and of the Positivist tactics of passive defence which was unable to protect the nation under oppression.

> Our society, following so many hardships, is presently undergoing a time of debilitation and apathy, wherein the awakening of new intellectual powers has become a must. What

49 J.K. Potocki assumed his pseudonym after Maria Bohuszewiczówna (1865-87), a teacher and an activist with the First Proletariat (the first Polish Marxist workers' party) who was sentenced to exile and died on her way to Siberia.

> we can see around us is a confusion of ideas and beliefs, a decay of former programmes and mottos of internal politics, a lack of clearly-set objectives of social development. […] Affected by the love of our country, we must not close our eyes to its present-day disasters and frailties; and, we would even more diligently watch where the seeds of new crops are inherent. […] Thus, the proposition of the rule whereby the interests and needs of our folk ought to be the preponderating emphasis in the social labour, the directive point of action, for both those of the intelligentsia who are tasked with effacing the errors of the past for those who in the sweat of their brow must create the earnest of the new role. *Prospekt* (a 'prospectus') preceding no. 1 of *Głos* of 2nd October 1886.

These radical slogans attracted to *Głos* columnists of various political options, all of whom remained sensitive to the burning social issues and intellectual currents that shaped at that time the consciousness of ideologues, penmen and party activists all around Europe. Among the weekly's founders and contributors were members of the secret National League (established in 1893) and the future leaders of the National Democracy camp: Jan-Ludwik Popławski, Zygmunt Balicki, and Roman Dmowski, then a young man (born in 1864) – along with men of socialist views, such as Ludwik Krzywicki or Wacław Nałkowski. The climate of this editorial team, mostly generated by Marian Bohusz, a unique personality, contributed to the legend of *Głos* and made the magazine an element of generational experience for its authors and readers, regardless of how far their individual political paths were later to diverge.

Głos contributors met at Czerski's restaurant, on the corner of Ordynacka and Nowy-Świat Street: their meetings turned with time into "a sort of everyday sacrament". The attendees "seated themselves around a large round table in one of the rooms directly adjacent to the balcony. A large glass jar of sangria stood confected on the table, a second and a third one following it sometimes. The chats went on extended over hours at a time. […] The sangria was light, but anyway, it released tongues once a glass or two were emptied, begot intimacy, conduced the contraction of cordial relationships between the banqueters, involving the once-indifferent comer in solidarity with the magazine and its views." The unhampered ambience of the editorial team's meetings, free of any direct pressure, reinforced the enthusiasts' opinions, helped persuade the sceptics, and charmed opponents. "*Głos* drew into its peculiar ambience not only its contributors but also its subscribers, binding them with itself sentimentally, and was a great ironworks where the people of varied types and intellectual level were forged into the executors of a clear, all-round-formulated view on social affairs. […] But all that came out by itself, without a discussion, with no hunting for human game whatsoever."[50]

50 Ludwik Krzywicki, *Wspomnienia* ['Memoirs'], vol. 3, Warszawa 1959, pp. 55, 62-63.

The late 1880s/early 1890s, with the discussions held among the *Głos* editors, was almost the last moment when Polish intellectuals, leftist and rightist alike, could, and were willing to, meet at a shared table, enjoying a jar of sangria. A radicalism of attitudes, feverish protests against the unjust social/national relations, a sense of the need for change and the opening to new ideas were more important than a consistent political programme; fluctuating memberships – nationalist into socialist, socialist into peasantry activist/peasant party member, and the other way around – were no rarity then.

Such behaviour, typical to a rather considerable group of Polish intellectuals in the late 19th century, is excellently exemplified by Aleksander Zawadzki (1859-1926), one of the leading propagators of education and the national idea among the lower strata of the Kingdom's society. In his younger years, Zawadzki joined the first Polish socialist groups, at home and in Switzerland. Deported to Siberia, he successfully risked a daring flight; later on, however, he resolved to voluntarily return to serve his term in full, which with time enabled him to undertake legal activity in the Kingdom. He joined the co-organisers of the national camp in the nineties and was active with the National League, among others; he also co-operated with numerous educational organisations in the Kingdom, and pursued overt and secret activity among peasants, workers and clergymen. Following the Revolution of 1905-7, he quit the ranks of National Democracy and took part (as 'Father Prokop') in the development of independence-inclined peasant movements, wrote a number of books and pamphlets for folk readers, and finally crowned his political activity with the founding of the National Peasants' Association in 1912.

Insofar as the fluctuating borderlines between the camps admitted such world-view volts in the late nineteenth century, the beginning of the following century was marked with fast-stiffening barriers. A symbolical harbinger of this change was, apparently, the closing down of the *Głos* editorial office by the Russian authorities, as a reply to the editors' participation in the preparation in Warsaw of illegal celebrations to mark the one-hundredth anniversary of the Kościuszko Insurrection. The demonstration in the streets of Warsaw's Old Town was followed by the deportation of a few *Głos* contributors to exile (Marian Bohusz got the severest sentence of a five years' exile, and died soon after his return home). The others, especially Popławski, Balicki and Dmowski, went away to Lwów, where they soon after (in 1895) founded *Przegląd Wszechpolski* ['The All-Polish Revue'], the principal transmitter of national ideas across the three partitioned areas (in the Kingdom and in the Poznań Province its distribution was illegal). This organ of the National-Democratic Party, founded in 1897, became a tribune that furnished Polish nationalism with arguments, epithets and slogans for the decades that followed.

At that same time, the organisational framework of the socialist movement was becoming solidified. In 1892, at a convention in Paris, the Polish Socialist Party was set up (operating illegally at home), as well as the Foreign Union of Polish Socialists. Overt socialist structures were formed, almost simultaneously, in Galicia and in the Poznań Province. Discussion of the programme, their means of action, or the subsequent scissions within these organisations would go far beyond the limits of a history of the Polish intelligentsia. It nonetheless needs to be emphasised that members of this intelligentsia took a direct, and often leading, part in the development of an ideological programme and in the organisational shaping of both camps, which by their definition definitely alienated themselves from (the) intelligentsia, or even combated it. The eminent activists with National Democracy and the PPS, theoreticians and practitioners of nationalism – like Popławski, Balicki and Dmowski, and those of Marxism – Krzywicki, Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz and, to an extent, Edward Abramowski, ranked among the leading figures of the Polish intellectual life of the late 19th / early 20th century, expressing their views on the most diverse issues of public life, and shaping the ideas and attitudes of a remarkable part of the period's Polish intelligentsia. In parallel, the programmes of the ideologies advocated by those people conceived the farthest-fetched critique of the intelligentsia: not just a condemnation of the errors, defects and drawbacks, sins, drolleries, debilities and partialities of the Polish educated stratum, but an attack against the intelligentsia as an integral part of the social organism, undermining its raison d'être and prophesising its disappearance in a not-quite-remote future.

For Marxists, the intelligentsia was merely a tool with which the working class would get emancipated; in this process, Kelles-Krauz wrote in 1894, the proletariat "absorbs, assimilates, and gives a class aspect to every alien demand that was formerly not voiced by the workers, as long as it remains in line with the striving for social development".[51] The cult of the masses and the negation of the role of outstanding individuals in the history of mankind menaced the foundations of the intelligentsia's ethos, the uniqueness of the single human being, his or her individual abilities, education, and the requirement to make use of these resources for the common weal. However, socialism – or, in broader but much less precise terms, the leftist attitude – became at the same time an intellectual and moral magnet that attracted a considerable group of the Polish intelligentsia

51 K. Kelles-Krauz, *Klasowość naszego programu* ['The class character of our programme'], quoted after: idem, *Naród i historia. Wybór pism*, ed. S. Ciesielski, Warszawa 1989, p. 49.

in the late 19th/early 20th century, particularly, the elites of the Kingdom and Warsaw. For Warsaw Positivists, the regaining of independence and the reconstruction of Poland as a state had been inseparably connected with civilisational advancement. For the generation of 'the defiant', these postulates had much in common with the combat for the rights of groups being rejected, oppressed or discriminated in the name of social inequality; also, with an attempt at overcoming the nationality-related stereotypes or the traditional roles assigned to the sexes. This left-oriented intelligentsia, in spite of its numerous slips and hesitations, turned out to be a formation determining the shape of Polish intellectual life at the century's turn. Their slip-ups, hesitations, quandaries, sacrifices, and successes have been registered by two very important contemporary works dealing with the ideological formation in question: Bohdan Cywiński's *Rodowody niepokornych* ['The Roots of the Mutineers'] (1971) and Andrzej Mencwel's *Przedwiośnie czy potop* ['The Coming Spring, or the Deluge?'] (1997). It was to the credit of 'the defiant' that the Polish intellectual history of the late 19th and the early 20th century became "a history of an efficient overcoming of our social history" (in Mencwel's words).

For nationalists, the Polish intelligentsia at the turn of the 20th century formed one of the real threats to the way of the nation's unrestricted development. The democratic heritage of the first half of the 19th century, the tradition of national and religious tolerance, a secular view of the world, Occidentalism and openness to the liberal ideas flowing from the West, and saturation with a Russian nihilism, a status so markedly stigmatised by the nationalists – the traits willingly ascribed to the intelligentsia of, primarily, Warsaw and the Kingdom, adopted by this group as its own – now became the vital charges levelled at them by *Przegląd Wszechpolski* and programmatic nationalist publications. All these threads were codified by Zygmunt Balicki in his work *Egoizm narodowy wobec etyki* ['National egoism versus ethics'] (1902) and, especially, by Roman Dmowski: his *Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka* ['Thoughts of a modern Pole'] became one of the most important and momentous books of the time (1st edition: 1903).

The basic, and most serious, charge, raised by Dmowski with respect to the Polish intelligentsia was their "un-national way of thinking" and lack of empathy for the real needs of their own nation. This picture was made of a strong nobility and romanticist tradition, 'foreign elements' (especially, the Jews) that joined the local intelligentsia after 1863, and ideological imports from the West and East, menacing the traditions constitutive for Polishness from its very dawn. As a result, Polish intellectuals found it impossible to understand Polish peasants or workers; placed a false humanitarianism and noxious tolerance above Polish national interest; appeared to be passive, incapable of reflecting and acting,

spiritually and factually alien to their own nation and, moreover, usurping for themselves the right to spiritually dominate over those classes. The term 'half-Poles', coined by Dmowski, excluded a considerable part of the Polish intelligentsia from the framework of national community.

It needs to be emphasised that the national-democratic criticism had a lot in common with its contemporary campaigns by French nationalists, conducted at the time of the Dreyfus Affair against leftist intellectuals. Those who defended Dreyfus were accused of having no understanding of the essential values of the French nation, of cosmopolitism, of professing an abstract and, essentially, pernicious idea of mankind, at the expense of the real interest of their own community. In the Polish realities, the arguments were reinforced by the fact that the object of the intelligentsia's dissent, so interpreted, was a captive nation without a state of its own, torn between the three multiply stronger powers. An accusation like this proved extremely painful and biased – in an era when serving this very community was a pivotal imperative of the intellectuals' ethos.

> Too weakly bound with their society, morally developed not satisfactorily enough to consider the public interest, the interest of the society they belong to, as their own, and to defend it as such […]; instead of the near, concrete society, they raise to their altars some abstract humanity, with its indefinable rights and interests; instead of a real value – a fiction that never obstructs their lives as it makes them bound by nothing. […] Their instinct of self-preservation, having nothing to do with the nation's self-preservation instinct, rebels against the line of conduct that commands to recognise the obligation with respect to a living organism which the society is, and not to an abstract idea of humanity.
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> Roman Dmowski, *Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka* ['Thoughts of a Modern Pole'], Lwów 1904, p. 168.

2. Renovation movements in the late 19th/early 20th century

Not only did the intellectual ferment of the late 19th century lead to a politicisation of views and stances for the Polish intelligentsia, but it coerced to reflect on the other areas of collective life, loosely associated with politics. Thus, a number of various renovation movements were fostered, normally initiated by young intellectuals, with themselves and their fellow human beings in view.

The abstinent movement was a strictly pedagogical initiative. The Catholic Church had propagated anti-alcoholic slogans since the late 19th century; in large urban hubs, many outstanding intellectuals not sharing the Catholic worldview supported them: for instance, Zofia Daszyńska-Golińska, an economist, propagated teetotalism in the working-class districts of Krakow.

The scouting movement was of a completely different dimension and range (the Polish equivalent *harcerstwo* was in use since 1916): like everywhere else in Europe, it was rooted in multiple ethics, gymnastics and national currents developing in late 19th/early 20th century amidst the youth. Currents and organisations of varied character, ideological diction and quality of type appeared among them. These included the 'Eleusis' Patriotic-Religious Association, founded in 1902 by the philosopher Wincenty Lutosławski, propagating an ethical restoration of the young generation, for instance through abstinence from alcoholic beverages and tobacco smoking, gambling, and sex; national independence-oriented youth associations, derived from National Democracy; organisations cultivating the ideal of physical fitness, the leading one being the 'Sokół' ['Falcon'] Gymnastics Society (set up in 1867 in Lwów, following its Czech counterpart 'Sokol' ['Hawk'/'Falcon']); Catholic and abstinence movements. The decisive role in reforging these inspirations into an organised scouting was held by Andrzej Małkowski (1889-1919), who translated into Polish the famous Robert Baden-Powell's book *Scouting for boys*, ran the first scouting course in Lwów in 1911, and subsequently formed (together with his wife Olga) the organisational foundations for the new movement.

> High ethical and moral standards were observed in Eleusis. Why moral revival? Because the Young Poland, appeared, Przybyszewski, the evil appeared. Lutosławski was right in his will to oppose what they propagated, their style of life – they abducted one another's wives, apart from anything else. Eleusis was meant as an antidote, a token of protestation against the demoralization the Young Poland signified.
> Stefania Strumiłłowa's opinion on the Eleusis Association (fragment), quoted after: Teresa Podgórska, *Stowarzyszenie Patriotyczno-Religijne Eleusis w latach 1902-1914* ['The 'Eleusis' Patriotic-Religious Association in 1902-14'], Lublin 1999, pp. 150-151.

The early years of the 20th century were also a period of immensely intensive reorganisational movements within Polish Catholicism. Of the Polish territory, Wielkopolska was the first to have seen a social type of Catholicism: it was instilled there in the late 19th century, making use of the German experience, especially the views of the Mainz bishop Wilhelm E. von Ketteler.

At the beginning of the following century, the new ideas grew particularly important in the Russian Partition area, where the Church had been subject to extremely severe repressive measures since the time of the January Insurrection; as a result, it focused on defending its own assets, emphasising the need to observe the liturgy, attend services and stay immune to strangeness – these were gaining an ascendancy over the spiritual, intellectual, but also the material and physical needs of its community members. This state of affairs favoured, on the one hand, the development of a clandestine, habitless monastic life (orders of

this kind were established by Father Honorat Koźmiński); on the other hand, it enabled a strong resonance locally for so-called Catholic modernism, and of the Church restoration and reform movement, stemming from the gap between the findings of nineteenth-century science and the rigid dogmas of faith. Catholic modernists, who were the strongest in France, wanted to resolve the conflict by transferring the focus of human cognition from the brain to the heart; from the mind to the sphere of feelings. In Polish conditions, this elemental contradictoriness overlapped with a critique of abuses (ethical and sexual, in the first place) committed by exponents of the Church, along with the latter's indirect acquiescence for unfair social relations.

Taken up at the beginning of the 20th century, the postulate of developing a new, deeper spirituality resulted in the appearance on the stage of a number of outstanding activists, and led (especially after 1918) to an evolvement of a milieu of young Catholic intellectuals gathered around the Rev. Władysław Korniłowicz and Elżbieta (born Róża-Maria) Czacka, a nun. Spectacular departures from Catholicism appeared as a parallel consequence, though. Izydor-Kajetan Wysłouch (1869-1937), a Capuchin monk, was probably the most notorious example: a man who lost his faith and subsequently became, now under the pseudonym 'Antoni Szech', one of the harshest, and most consistent, critics of the role of the Church in the history of Poland, and of the 'Catholic Pole' stereotype. At last, an unexpected consequence of the in-Church reformatory currents was the birth of Mariavitism, a movement that evolved as remonstrance against hypocrisy, spiritual sluggishness and fossilisation of ecclesiastic structures, and after 1905 turned into a bargaining card with which the Russian authorities fought off the Church, Catholicism, and Polish national aspirations.

This same need for reform, refurbishment, and search for new forms of collective or group life, which was a shared feeling across Europe, inclined a number of Polish intellectuals to get involved in a co-operative movement of a most varied ideological colouring.

The co-operative system in the Polish lands had a tradition behind it dating to the 1860s (Stanisław Staszic, who was active some fifty years earlier, being considered its precursor), and proved particularly strong in the Prussian Partition. The first modern lending co-operative (*Spółdzielnia Kredytowa*) was set up in 1861 in Poznań. In the century's late years, the idea of co-operative proprietorship spontaneously developed in Galicia, the finest example being the system of mutual-aid funds, originated by Franciszek Stefczyk (1861-1924). A historian by education and a teacher by profession, this man excelled as a founder of the co-operative and mutual-aid movement in the rural areas of the Austrian Partition. In 1890, Stefczyk founded, in Galicia, the first rural savings-and-lending

co-operative in Polish territory, which operated according to the German Raiffeisen system. With time, as the movement initiated by Stefczyk developed, he took high offices with the Galician autonomous authorities; after Poland regained independence, he managed the Central Fund of Agricultural Partnerships and, shortly before his death (in 1924), he was appointed the leader of the Union of Agricultural Co-operatives' Associations.

However, the theoretical foundations of the co-operative movement were developed in the Kingdom in the early years of the 20th century, and it was there that the trend assumed a thoroughly intelligentsia-related character, based on the activities of Edward Abramowski, Rafał Radziwiłłowicz, Stanisław Wojciechowski, and Stefan Żeromski, to name its most excellent exponents. The co-operative system reached its climax in the Russian Partition in the revolutionary years of 1905-7: the moment the Revolution broke out, the Kingdom had twenty-two consumer co-operatives, established between 1869 and 1904, with 500 new associations brought into being over the following three years. This unprecedented jump was owed to the intellectual, propagation and organisational activities of Edward Abramowski (1868-1918), the philosopher and sociologist, and author of a few works on social ethics and activity under a real or imagined democracy, and on the idea of co-operatism – evolving independently of the state, or even contrary to it; *Idee społeczne kooperatyzmu* was the most important book among them.

> Member of free associations is a type that *creates the life* with the powers of his mind, character, and heart – and this is the citizen of a democracy; whereas individual moving around loose, in a herd, is but a passive cog in the hands of bureaucracy and party leaders; a slave of the living conditions, and a type of slavish society. […] Co-operatism sees in the moral transformation of man – a slave into a free creator of life – its major task, a deep essence of the democratic culture it propagates.
> Edward Abramowski, *Idee społeczne kooperatyzmu* ['The social ideas of co-operatism'], Warszawa 1907, pp. 14-15, 16.

Lastly, the end of the 19th century was also the period when an organisational framework was established for a women's movement (later on, the foreign name 'feminism' came into use). The first forums at which Polish women could experience a sense of partnership in a common action with males were the radical plots of the 1840s and, particularly, in the January Insurrection period. At the century's end, their role was taken over by socialist conspiracies, which for a number of women – Polish and Jewish alike – became an alternative to the conventionalised, and less and less often satisfactory, life roles of obedient daughters and wives, 'priestesses of the hearth', disembodied muses, monumental 'Polish Mothers'. Taking advantage of these structures, women could feel safe for the first time – owing not so much to their womanliness, attractiveness and

reproductive potential as the power of their devotion, resoluteness, and reason. However, women's activity soon after gained its own specific identity.

Following the period of more or less daring emancipation slogans and individual attempts at becoming educated and gaining a job in the labour market, Warsaw and Lwów saw the emergence of structures of a movement that would demand completely equal rights in access to education and labour. These included: Warsaw's conspiratorial 'Unia' organisation, of 1889; the Women's Labour Delegation (then renamed as Circle), Warsaw, of 1894; *Ster*, a bi-weekly published from 1895-7 in Lwów discussed a variety of issues relating to the life of women, their place in society and the family, their intellectual development and career opportunities. Among the movement's pioneers appeared, among others: Kazimiera Bujwidowa [Bujwid], Maria Konopnicka, Maria Dulębianka [Dulęba], along with their sympathising men (one such was Piotr Chmielowski, a *Ster* contributor). The leading part, though, was played by Paulina Kuczalska-Reinschmit (1859-1921), a columnist and social activist, a highly charismatic and zesty organiser, and author of theoretical works. The organisational foundations provided by these people enabled the development of feminist associations at the beginning of the 20th century and the appearance of mature declarations, such as *Chcemy całego życia* ['We want life, in its entirety'] from the famous speech of the writer Zofia Nałkowska at the National Convention of Polish Women in Warsaw, of 1907.

3. Generational differences

A modernistic crisis of traditional values and the intellectual ferment seething under the screwed-down lid of censorship impressed a stigma on almost all the domains of social life, but, quite clearly, did not remove the arrangements, structures or methods elaborated on by the preceding generation of Polish intellectuals, who were still active intellectually, professionally, and politically. In Galicia, the political power, state education system and intellectual 'power over souls' still remained in the hands of the conservatives. This monopoly was only breached at the century's turn, as a socialist and a peasants' party were founded and new social-political periodicals were published (such as *Nowa Reforma*, published from 1881 in Krakow; the socialistic *Naprzód*, from 1892; and, especially, *Krytyka*, edited by Wilhelm Feldman and issued, with a short intermission, between 1896 and the war's outbreak). The primary factor, however, was a relaxation of mores and moral standards, occurring in the first years of the 20th century, along with novel means of artistic expression taken up by the artists of the 'Zielony Balonik' ['Green Balloon'] literary cabaret; this will be covered as we go on.

In the Prussian Partition, strengthening German nationalism continued to push the locally very thin layer of the Polish intelligentsia toward practising defensive national, educational, mutual-aid and economic activities, at the expense of intellectual interests: the individuals not satisfied with this (like Stanisław Przybyszewski, born near Inowrocław, educated in a German high-school in Toruń) would move to Germany, Galicia, or Warsaw.

A Pyrrhic victory was the case with the Kingdom's Positivists: the posterity distilled a single point out of their programme, the recommendation of legal and safe organic work, while rejecting almost all the modernisation postulates. The style of life and social action typical to the intelligentsia proved more durable than the programme. In the Warsaw of the late 19th and the early 20th century, the hubs which emerged in the Positivist breakthrough period: editorial officers, private homes, cafés, social scientific institutions, continued functioning uninterruptedly. Most of the literary, scientific, musical and political salons of Warsaw bustled until the first years of the 20th century; some of them – for example, Dr Karol Benni's salon – becoming influential to the highest degree in the city's and country's life. The turn of the century, the time of growth and triumph for a new generation, new ideas, goals and purposes, was paradoxically the years of the most demonstrational successes of the fathers' generation. Among them was the erection, in Warsaw, of the society-funded Adam Mickiewicz monument (1898) and of the edifices of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts (1900) and the Warsaw Philharmonic (1901). On the occasion of Tsar Nicholas II's visit to Warsaw, 3.5 million roubles were collected and assigned for the construction of the Polytechnic Institute (1899-1901; later, the Warsaw University of Technology). The ruins of the historic Mazovian Dukes' Castle in Czersk were also purchased (1907-8).

At the time, Warsaw no more resembled its former self: as later pictured in the memoirs of Ludwik Krzywicki, Józef Dąbrowski ('Grabiec'), Stanisław Koszutski, Stanisław Stempowski, or Helena Boguszewska, it was now a city of secret lectures and secretive political party offices, unheated tiny student rooms, where great plans to refurbish the world were devised; a city of 'she-dromedaries' transmitting illegal propaganda publications, hot debates amidst the fumes of tobacco smoke, first gatherings and first strikes. Characteristically to the seventies or eighties, almost every act of a social or society-oriented nature was *eo ipso* a fact from the history of the Polish intelligentsia, but now this trend was becoming the past. The radical intelligentsia of the late 19th/early 20th century all the same reproduced, to an extent, the modes of action earlier elaborated on by the (once) 'young' Positivists: the apartments of Jan-Władysław Dawid and his wife Jadwiga, née Szczawińska, Stefan and Oktawia Żeromski, or Wacław

Sieroszewski, the editorial boards of: *Głos*, run by Mr. and Mrs. Dawid; *Prawda*, after a radical circle purchased it from A. Świętochowski in 1900; or, *Ogniwo* (published in 1902 to 1905), performed similar functions to those of the salons and editorial offices of the preceding generation.

A good example of that coexistence, not free of mutual enmity, was the ceremony of the unveiling of the Adam Mickiewicz monument in Warsaw on the poet's birth centenary. In March 1897, at a 'Friday' at Dr Benni's, an informal committee was set up (joined by Henryk Sienkiewicz, the project's initiator, Dionizy Henkiel, and others) and requested the Governor-General of Warsaw for consent for honouring the Polish Prophet-Bard. Then, the same group of Benni's salon frequenters resolved that the monument design should be entrusted to Cyprian Godebski. The idea to have the monument built encountered an immediate mass response, and the necessary funds were soon raised. The Russian authorities granted their consent for the celebration, under stipulations that severely upset its significance: the erection committee was to be run by Prince Michał Radziwiłł, an extreme loyalist (whom the malicious named a "fossil bat", his "mind illiberal, made of a keyboard with just a few keys"[52]), then chairman of the Warsaw Charity Society; the unveiling ceremony was performed, on 24th December 1898, under a tight police cordon, with only carefully selected individuals, holders of entry tickets, being let in. The silence remained almost uninterrupted: any speeches were banned, and thus Sienkiewicz had to publish in Krakow's *Czas* an oration he had written beforehand. Meanwhile, regardless of the official celebration, the PPS and the nationalists prepared numerous occasional lectures and ceremonies across Warsaw, for young intellectuals and workers. The organisers of both celebrations, the legal and the clandestine one, regarded the Romanticist Prophet-Bard as a figure worthy of commemoration, by all accounts; his output was for everybody a source of emotional and aesthetic experiences. But the late years of the 19th century was a moment when, as Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz put it, "if a labourer and a capitalist see Mickiewicz as their own poet, each of them has a different Mickiewicz in front of his eyes; they might have a shared […] domain where no class struggles are reflected: the language, the images, the form of verse; as regards the spirit, though, Adam will be a poet of mushroom-picking for some, and a poet of conspirators for the others."[53] This duality is equally well applicable to the two generations of Polish intellectuals.

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52 Narrans [Stanisław Krzemiński], *Listy z zaboru rosyjskiego* ['Letters from the Russian Partition'], series IX, p. 153; series XI, p. 101.

53 Michał Luśnia [Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz], *Rachunek* ['The account to settle'], 'Przedświt '1896, no. 10-11; quoted after: K. Kelles-Krauz, *Naród i historia*, p. 75.

4. Promoting Polish education in society

Propagation of education in the Polish language was the area where the gap between the generations proved the deepest. There was a need to promote Polish education in the Prussian and Russian Partitions where the respective state languages were binding in schools, with the result that even religious instruction was lectured in either German or Russian. In the autonomous province of Galicia, education was in Polish hands, on all the tiers; with time, the provincial authorities made a concession for the Ukrainian language (which was used in a considerable share of folk schools, as the language of instruction was chosen through the resolution of a communal council). At the same time, the teaching of, and in, the Polish language was an issue that became more burning with the passage of time, once it turned out that any legal actions – popular talks, educational publications admitted by the censors, the press targeted at the common people – were unable to counterbalance the influence of the official school system which had for a number of years subjected the students to a consistent regime, endeavouring to reforge them not only into loyal subjects of their rulers but, at the time nationalist slogans were triumphant, into genuine Germans or Russians. The young radical Polish intelligentsia in both provinces took a stab at balancing this influence by illegal action, self-educative and aiming at propagating education in the native language among uneducated social strata, by spreading new contents at secret courses or by means of pamphlets.

> Quite a number of oppressed nations have already struggled for a school of their own. But such actions were always conducted by the older generation. It is probably our peculiarity that the youth have themselves committed the resolving deeds, ravishing their elders. There were such who saw in this youth movement, primarily, a painful, if not outraging, paedocracy.
> Bogdan Nawroczyński, Introduction to: *Nasza walka o szkołę polską 1901-1917* ['Our battle for Polish schools, 1901-17'], Warszawa 1932, vol. 1, p. 2.

The Scientific Help Society for the Youth of the Grand Duchy of Poznań existed in the Prussian Partition from 1841, and was tasked with granting scholarships to indigent talented male youths. The organisation delivered its statutory objectives over the entire period under discussion, enabling, until 1914, some 3,600 young people to complete their education, which equates to an average of less than fifty per year. The Society's activity, albeit significant, could by no means influence the consciousness of school students at large; what it basically aimed at was "educating the elites by the elites", to quote Lech Trzeciakowski, an expert in the history of Greater Poland.

Education of the masses in the Polish spirit was the idea behind the Popular Education Society, established in 1872 but it was dissolved by the authorities

a mere six years later; more powerful in this respect was the People's Libraries Society (established in 1880), which at the beginning of the 20th century ran a network of more than 1,600 local libraries in the Poznań Province, Pomerania, Varmia and Masuria, Silesia, as well as in the clusters of the Polish diaspora in Germany. In the areas with a prevalently Polish population, in Wielkopolska first of all, Polish children incessantly stayed in touch with their mother tongue and culture outside of school – in their family homes as well as in churches, singing and sports societies, during celebrations of religious or patriotic holidays, and in amateur theatres. Yet, in the multinational areas, the ousting of the Polish language and, in particular, the elimination of religious instruction in Polish from elementary schools in Pomerania (1897) and in the Poznań Province (1901) was a particularly severe blow. This act triggered protests of Polish communities in various locations across the Prussian Partition, followed by school strikes, culminating in the famed incidents in Września [German, Wreschen], in May 1901 and in Osiek, Pomerania, in 1906.

Since the late 1890s, the Association of Polish Youth 'Zet' enjoyed increasing popularity among the Prussian Partition intelligentsia's youth. This organisation, set up in 1886 by Zygmunt Balicki, was afterwards associated with the National League. Some members of this group of young, some of them very young, activists later became outstanding nationalist politicians, examples being: Marian Seyda (1879-1967), a lawyer, and editor of Poznań magazines; Wojciech Korfanty (1873-1939), the leader of the Silesian Risings; and, especially, Bernard Chrzanowski (1861-1944), a Poznań barrister and columnist, the chairman of 'Sokół' in Wielkopolska, a senator in the Second Republic period, a leading defender of the Polish status of Pomerania before its regained independence (which won him the nickname of 'Mr. Chałubiński of the Polish Coast').

In the late 1890s, influenced by 'Zet', or completely spontaneously here or there, a network of patriotic and self-educational circles emerged in junior high schools (gymnasia) in Wielkopolska and Pomerania, called 'the Philomaths' or 'the Red Rose'. The memoirist accounts of their members provide us with descriptions of experiences comparable with what the novelist Żeromski portrayed in *Syzyfowe prace* ['Sisyphean labours']. Although these associations were detected two to three years later, their members sentenced to a term in prison, following show trials in Gniezno and Toruń, the idea of the Philomathian movement in gymnasia – with its strong tradition in the Prussian Partition, marked with Polish and German secret youth unions in the former half of the 19th century – nowise came to a standstill: secret associations of Polish students reappeared in a considerable number of schools before the Great War.

[Before 29th November 1897,] Boleś Makowski, a friend of mine, came over to me and said, "Listen, would you like to improve your Polish?" At which I said, "Well, of course yes, it's a shame on me that my command of my mother tongue is so poor." Then, he unveiled before me the secret, greatly astonishing to me, that a secret organisation existed among the Polish youth of the higher gymnasium grades, tasked, apart from observance of morality and virtue, with learning Polish history and literature, and conservation of the national spirit. On the eve of the November Insurrection anniversary, I pledged, in my colleague's dwelling, […] an oath to the crucifix that I should conscientiously observe all the regulations and the statutes of the clandestine organisation of Philomaths, and keep its existence absolutely confidential. […] It was only at that point that I did realise the truth. […] I returned home, as if in ecstasy, stupefied throughout. What I was through was like what St. Paul faced near Damascus. But I was overwhelmed with regret that I had been blind for so long; that I saw the light.
Ks. Józef Dembieński, *Radości mało – goryczy dużo. Pamiętnik Pomorzanina z lat 1879-1920* ['So little of Joy, so much bitterness. A memoir of a Pomeranian, 1879-1920'], ed. A. Bukowski, Warszawa 1985, pp. 84-85.

In the Russian Partition, Polish educational activists had rarer opportunities to wrestle with gymnasium students remaining blind to the truth, but the Russification of the elementary school system put throngs of thousands of children from the countryside, small towns and metropolitan centres against the real threat of denationalisation. At the same time, the threat hung over an equally numerous population of adult illiterates and semi-illiterates. The state educational machinery intended to suck those masses into the circle of conscious Russianness or, at least, a dynastic loyalism and passive acceptance of the status quo. Aware of these menaces, the Polish intelligentsia, especially of the younger generation, tried to counteract them virtually from the dawn of its public activity.

Their activity was double-tracked: self-education was combined with organisation of a secret teaching network, intentionally extending to villages and quarters of large cities inhabited by the working class. Characteristic to the period was an equally strong involvement in education-oriented strivings of nationalistically and socialistically-inclined activists – initially acting together and from then on, opposing one other. This mutual effort proved decisive to the action's measurable success.

The germs of illegal self-education organisations in the Kingdom fell upon the late 1870s/early 1880s. An enormous role in their alliance was played by the aforesaid 'Zet' Polish Youth Association (established in 1886). Along with this conspiratorial organisation, there operated half-overt associations, registered as mutual-aid circles but were active in the education field beyond their statutory terms – to mention the Fraternal Aid among Warsaw University students (set up in 1889), 'Spójnia', organised in the same environment (1899), or alliances of

the Polytechnic Institute students. The background for these associations was the secretive circles of gymnasium students from Warsaw, Radom, Kielce, Płock, Lublin, and other Congress-Kingdom towns.

In parallel, various forms developed of the overt, half-overt and undercover instruction of workers, craftsmen and peasants. The popular press, the lives of saints, calendars, straightforward-style tales, hygiene guidelines, Sunday courses, along with the daily routine of illegal lessons and underground publications distributed within the circle of trusted recipients – all these means were taken advantage of by the educators both of the Right and the Left. Their attempted codification, at least within Warsaw, was undertaken by the Society of Secret Instruction (1894), one of whose founders was Cecylia Śniegocka. In the first year of its activity, the Secret Instruction covered 250 children from the poorest districts of Warsaw; ten years later, it boasted a covey of 2,000 wards, and gained the name of the 'bare-foot university'.

The educational work was joined by hundreds, possibly thousands of people: rural and urban teachers, priests, educated landowners, folk press editors and, in the first place, intellectuals *tout court*, people of varied educational backgrounds, of either sex with varying views on the world, although all of them were united by the will to improve the reality around them and the belief, backed or not with an in-depth philosophical afterthought, that a better arranged world would be a feasible project.

Probably the first in that pleiad was Konrad Prószyński (1851-1908), who spent his childhood and younger years in the Siberian town of Tomsk, where, along with his mother and siblings, he accompanied his father who had been sent into exile after the January Insurrection. Konrad was eventually allowed to move to Warsaw (Byelorussia, the geographically closest native land, remained closed for a political exile) and graduated from a Law department there; in as early as 1875 (at the age of 24), he founded a secret Society for National Education, which set as a goal for itself the propagation of education among common people. The following years saw Prószyński – now under the pseudonym Kazimierz Promyk – as the author of the most popular primers used by generations of countryside children; he wrote the first modern textbooks which broke with the traditional system of mere rote learning, in an attempt to adapt the teaching to the student's potential. In 1881, he began publishing a weekly, *Gazeta Świąteczna*, devised for the peasant reader, and propagated by means of it – virtually, the last such in his generation – the ideas of social solidarity and a long-lasting common effort in view of the country's future good.

A peer of Promyk's was The Rev. Zygmunt Chełmicki (1851-1922), a Varsovian, a Doctor of Theology, a canon and, in his later years, a prelate with the

capital-town chapter, who was an outstanding orator, writer, and social worker. As a preacher, he delivered, for instance, a speech at the funeral service for the soul of Józef Mianowski (1879). As a priest, he decided to go to Brazil in 1891, as he wanted to verify the reports on the dramatic lot of the Polish émigrés there. As a social worker, he was one of the most popular figures in the Warsaw of the late 19th and early 20th century: he co-founded a shelter hostel for infirm female teachers in Zielonka (1880), in Warsaw, a Craftsmen's Fund and a Literary Fund; movable cook-houses for the poorest; and, particularly, the Society of Accommodation Asylums (1895), which became a refuge for throngs of homeless people. As a man of letters, he primarily earned merit as the editor of 'The Christian Works Library', which featured, for example, the widely-read *Podręczna Encyklopedia Kościelna*, a concise ecclesial encyclopaedia.

An associate and student of Konrad Prószyński was Mieczysław Brzeziński (1858-1911); he represented a different generation. Born to a poor Warsaw family, through hard work, sacrifice and private lessons, he passed through his gymnasium course with difficulty and eventually joined a secret group run by Promyk, while a natural sciences student at Warsaw University. Detained and imprisoned, he finally managed to complete his studies but could not obtain the right to teach in public schools. This made of him a tutor, but Brzeziński primarily became an activist in the field of education, an author of popular works on natural and environmental matters, the editor of the *Zorza* weekly, and a contributor to *Głos*. After 1905, he was among the founders of the Polish Educational Society (*Polska Macierz Szkolna*). He left Warsaw in his later years and moped to a few-morgue (few-acre) farm-holding near Nałęczów, where he could literally confront the ideas he advocated with the realities of the early-twentieth-century Polish countryside.

The motions of Ludwik Krzywicki's life (1859-1941) were completely different: this descendant of a landed-gentry family from Płock became one of the most eminent socialist theoreticians and publicists of the late 19th/early 20th century. A mathematician by education, he co-established Polish sociology and anthropology, but first of all was a tireless social activist, taking part in a wealth of projects – from the Flying University to the dozen-or-so educational organisations legalised after 1905. Resulting from his overtly declared views, he was for several years before World War One the object of a fierce campaign from the nationalists, which was possibly compensated by his post-war professorship in Warsaw and election as member of the Polish Academy of Learning. In the Second Republic, he ran the Social Management Institute which mainly dealt with the situation of the working class and the peasantry. Gravely injured during the siege of Warsaw in September 1939, Krzywicki died two years after the war broke out.

Cecylia Śniegocka (1862-1934), Krzywicki's few years younger, also devoted herself to illegal educational activities from her early youth, taking part in all the major initiatives in Warsaw and elsewhere. From 1894 onwards, she headed the Secret Instruction Society which co-ordinated these projects. In his already-quoted voice, Stanisław Michalski regarded her as a 'one-man-institution', a member of the group of a few social workers whose attitude and actions determined the survival of Polish culture under the Russian Partition.

As for Stanisław Michalski himself (1865-1949), a Volhynian by origin and a Varsovian by choice, an engineer by education, and employed with the Warsaw-Vienna Railroad, he was an extremely active social worker, and the initiator and editor of a serial guide for the self-taught (*Poradnik dla Samouków*, 1898-1939); in independent Poland, he ran the Scientific Department of the Mianowski Fund. In the late 19th/early 20th century, he made a name for himself primarily as a youth warden and as a spontaneous and charismatic educator whose personal enthusiasm and vigour stimulated similar virtues among the students and gymnasium pupils who gathered around him.

A no less important role was played by Stefania Sempołowska (1870-1944), an enterprising activist, columnist and education theoretician, co-organiser of secret courses for women – the germ of the Flying University, and a member on the board of the Warsaw Charity Society's Reading Libraries Department, which organised free-of-charge reading rooms and book libraries for the most indigent inhabitants of Warsaw. Along with many other aspects of her secret activities, Sempołowska ran, for almost ten years, in her own apartment, an illegal boarding school for girls, doing the eighth-year gymnasium curriculum. These activities were only stopped by Stefania's exit from the Kingdom, coerced by the authorities, in January 1903. Excelling with her mind's qualities, intriguing with her beauty, always wearing a black dress, as a woman of above-average height, she was – in the opinion of L. Krzywicki, the no less eminent social worker – "not an ordinary teacher who would stealthily teach the others Polish: she was an apostless of the struggle for Polish culture, not just with her words but with her continual, everyday doings".

Much closer to the National Democracy circles was Fr. Marceli Godlewski (1865-1945), a Doctor of Theology, a curate in Jedwabne and Łódź, a professor at Warsaw's Theological Seminary and a long-term parson of several Warsaw parishes. He was simultaneously an active and an up-and-doing social activist, the founder (during the Revolution of 1905) of the Christian Workers' Association, the editor of *Kronika Rodzinna* ['Family Chronicle'] (1905-7) and the author of a number of works popularising the Bible and papal social teaching.

Lastly, of the very large group of educational activists, many of whom remained nameless, Jadwiga Szczawińska-Dawidowa (1864-1910) definitely deserves a

mention, along with the other female co-founders of the so-called Flying University. This University was probably the most unique, unprecedented and unparalleled phenomenon in the illegal education area, in the Russian Partition and beyond.

Secret self-teaching courses for girls were organised in Warsaw from the academic year of 1881/2, initially at the suggestion of the students of the Imperial Russian University of Warsaw. Held in private apartments (for example, with the help of landladies occupying themselves with letting rooms to students), the project came to grief after a series of arrests and dismissals executed by the University in 1883. The idea was revisited soon afterwards; this time, young women played the initiating role, along with the students. Jadwiga Szczawińska's efforts helped turn the illegal lectures into permanent, deeply secretive courses, starting from the academic year of 1885/6.

"First of all", a memoirist says, "[Szczawińska] ensured for herself accommodation in a dozen-or-so apartments, in houses of unimpeachable political loyalty and, at times, high social position." Those first conspiratorial 'lecture rooms' included the apartments of exponents of the Warsaw financial elite, the Director of Bank Handlowy and the Chairman of the Credit Society among them. The classes were also held in the lodgings of the students or the professors, in private educational institutions (female boarding schools, in the first place; also in, for example, kindergarten institutions), and in overt, private or communal scientific establishments (for instance, experiments illustrative for the lectures in physics or chemistry were carried out at the Museum of Industry and Agriculture laboratories). The lecturing venues were often changed, the students and their preceptors rambled around the city: hence the name 'Flying University', which became a set colloquial phrase.

This amazing tertiary school was structurally based on the way its female students were organised (the lecturers usually confined themselves to delivering their lectures). A management board of a few people fronted it, whilst the lectures were arranged for, and the money collected, by the cashiers of the individual groups. The voluntary contributions of the courses' participants were mostly assigned as royalties for the lecturers (who were paid 3-4 roubles per hour), or, less often, for hiring the lecturing spaces. All this expanded machinery worked under complete conspiracy, and "Ms. Szczawińska ran the clandestine lecturing affairs with a daring hand, thoroughly boldly, if not insolently, ignoring all the police regulations"[54].

54 Ludwik Krzywicki, *Wspomnienia*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1958, p. 365.

In parallel to the emergence of the Flying University, the foundations were laid for a collection of learned book meant to be used by its female students. In 1885-6, they founded, based on their own contributions, a legal library of books and foreign periodicals; it was then turned, in 1890, into a "social institution based upon a private agreement between Ms. [Szczawińska-] Dawidowa and a group of people from the scientific and literary circles, whereby these people submit their book collections as deposits for public use, under certain terms-and-conditions that ensure the institution's social character."[55] A dozen or more individuals, of Warsaw's strict intellectual elite, handed over their own private collections; the other contributions included the collection presented by the Students' Fraternal Aid of the Imperial University of Warsaw, along with those of a few smaller earlier existing reading libraries for women. In 1894, due to Szczawińska-Dawidowa's endeavours, this centre was finally organised as the Reading Library of Learned Works and Journals (colloquially called 'the Learned Library'), whose board included donors and students. Szczawińska-Dawidowa stipulated the final say for herself; her responsibilities included raising funds indispensable for the Library's daily operations.

Owing to such a hinterland, the number of students of the 'Flying University' was growing systematically. At the beginning of the 1890s, they were estimated to be about 200, while in the middle of the decade they reached 500, and in one year surpassed a thousand, which meant that at least a hundred lecturing hours were delivered a week; for comparison, there were around 1,500 students at the state-run Imperial University of Warsaw at that time.

Initially, most of the 'Flying University' audience consisted of women. From the 1890s onwards, its courses were also attended by male students from the legal Russified university. In all, several thousand women went through those studies; among them was the chemist Maria Skłodowska (later to be Marie Curie), the historian Natalia Gąsiorowska, Stefania Sempołowska, Helena Radlińska – the founder of the Polish school of pedagogy and the history of enlightenment; also, Jadwiga Sikorska, Jadwiga Kowalczykówna and Jadwiga Jawurkówna – years later, the headmistresses of the best girls' boarding schools in Warsaw. Throughout the period of the university's work, many of its poorer students could listen to the lectures free of charge.

The significance of the 'Flying University' was decided not only by the social demand for a centre of this sort, or by the efficiency of its female organisers. Szczawińska and her associates managed to gain the co-operation of the most outstanding Polish

55 Stanisław Stempowski, *Dzieje bajeczne Biblioteki Publicznej* ['The fabulous history of the Public Library'], 'Bibliotekarz', Y-r XIV, 1947, no. 11-12, p. 190.

scholars and scientists who worked in Warsaw. The lectures were initially dominated by the natural sciences; social sciences and the humanities gained in importance by the end of the 19th century. The attending students considered the classes given by the sociologist Ludwik Krzywicki, the historian Władysław Smoleński and the literary historian Piotr Chmielowski to be the most inspiring and interesting.

The major participation of the scientists and research scholars in illegal lectures was, on the one hand, an obvious result of the great energy, enterprising spirit and power of conviction represented by Jadwiga Szczawińska and her associates. On the other hand, however, it derived from the more general posture of the Polish intelligentsia of the late 19th/early 20th century, for whom social and educational activity – even if menaced by the partitioner's repressions – was a natural *modus operandi* at the time when Polish society was deprived of its own state. And, last but not least, a steady and quite decent income assured by those lectures was a factor of importance too. Before Poland regained her independence, any kind of scientific research was in desperate want of investment, for it was financed (as mentioned above) solely due to a social effort, by voluntary contributions and private bequests, coming from all over a divided country. As a result, the search for earnings, and especially, of a steady source of support, consumed much of the energy even of the most outstanding scholars. This being the case, the honoraria collected from the students were for the 'Flying University' lecturers a considerable contribution to their domestic and professional budgets.

None of the above-outlined determinants and drivers that made the 'Flying University' a successful undertaking can play down the importance of the enormous role Jadwiga Szczawińska had in the creation and functioning of those courses. Together with her family and social background, she was quite a characteristic figure for her era; the twists and turns of her life can be considered symbolic for the entire generation of female educational activists and for the whole intellectual formation that had a real bearing on Polish intellectual life at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

In the eighties and nineties, Jadwiga Szczawińska's family house in Warsaw was the meeting venue for the young progressive intelligentsia; Jadwiga was herself an attraction, as were her two younger sisters: Wanda (born in 1866, later a physician and social activist) and Helena (born in 1872, a pianist and the wife of the outstanding composer, pianist and conductor Henryk Melcer[56]). Already

56 To honour his wife's family, H. Melcer also used the surname Melcer-Szczawiński. Wanda Melcer, the daughter of Helena and Henryk, was a writer who immortalised her mother's relatives and friends in a few key novels.

as a gymnasium student did Jadwiga Szczawińska engage in legal and illegal educational activities, working as a teacher, writing brochures for the folk and articles on social mutual aid and the education of women, delivering lectures. She married Jan-Władysław Dawid, a pedagogue and publicist, in 1893, and devoted much of her effort thereafter to supporting her husband's work as a researcher. Her vigour and stubbornness enabled her to reconcile and deliver all the initiatives she undertook. Yet, her impetuosity, vehemence and despotic inclinations, emphasised by the memoirists, eventually resulted in her dismissal as a member of the 'Flying University' and Learned Library organising team.

In 1894, Szczawińska was arrested and placed in the Warsaw Citadel; Dawid, sentenced in his absence, for his secret lecturing, to fortress confinement, managed to escape from Warsaw to Galicia. His wife, once released, successfully wheedled in Petersburg consent for her husband's return to Poland; however, during their absence, a split took place at the university. A majority, averse to Szczawińska, decided to transform it into a number of associated or detached circles, of which there were, according to Ludwik Krzywicki, a few dozen, totalling a thousand students, right before the Revolution of 1905. A real threat from the Russian gendarmerie was the reason why wider-ranging precautions were taken. They were forced, in particular, by the detention of Piotr Chmielowski and his placement in the Citadel in 1896 (the authorities intervened following a foolhardy letter by a 'Flying University' female student, mentioning Chmielowski's illegal lectures on Polish Romanticist poetry[57]). Although this eminent scholar was released after a week, and the university's structures remained undetected, the female organisers started altering the lecturing places even more often, which further contributed to the decentralisation of these courses.

Once back in Warsaw, Jadwiga and Jan-Władysław Dawid did not withdraw from public life. They became the editors of the revived *Głos*, from 1900, making it the most leftist of the Warsaw magazines of the period. The diarists recollected vivid disputes entered into during the editorial staff meetings, alongside the increasing despotism of the hostess. *Głos* ceased being published in 1905; the following years saw Jadwiga's neurosis grow severer. The ban from the authorities and her own ailment completely paralysed her pedagogical activity; to make

57 As reported by Janusz Chmielowski, Piotr's son, and quoted by Edward Kiernicki in the Foreword to: *Korespondencja Antoniego Sygietyńskiego i Piotra Chmielowskiego. Dwugłos z lat 1880-1904* ['Antoni Sygietyński – Piotr Chmielowski: Letters. A dialogue from 1880-1904'] Wrocław 1963. Other testimonies say that Chmielowski was arrested resulting from a lecture on Adam Mickiewicz he had delivered to the benefit of the Learned Library.

things worse, most of her former associates and friends turned their back on her. The author of the by-now-only biographical portrait of Jadwiga Szczawińska, written more than seventy years ago, did not hesitate to name those decadent years of her life a Golgotha.[58] Jadwiga committed suicide on 26th February 1910. Her death may be considered as one of the few symbolic closures of a period of importance in the history of the Polish intellectual elites, when the recognised need to do common work for the benefit of society and, especially, for improving its educational standard, prevailed over ideological and political differences.

The 'Flying University' outlived its founder. The policies of the authorities, alleviated during the 1905-7 Revolution, were legalised under the name of the Society for Educational Courses and were formally divided into four departments where female students were still represented as a significant majority. The Learned Library collection, containing 3,000 books and several hundred annuals of volumes of periodicals, became, in 1907, the nucleus of the Public Library of the Capital City of Warsaw.

5. The Revolution of 1905-7

The solidification of the nationalist and socialist camps at the turn of the century – and the consequent polarisation of the postures of intellectuals – determined not only a change in the methods of action, but also inevitably led to the growing conflicts within the educated stratum. The Polish intelligentsia was deeply, and often quite dramatically, split internally over the entire Partition period: their conflicting views on the present, past and future of the country, different habits in morals and mores, antithetical visions of ongoing activities and a number of other factors and drivers caused that no golden period of concord and mutual love has virtually ever existed. A completely united and common front of Poles against their enemies has never been completely elaborated on – the attitude toward the partitioners varied by time and place; for instance, acceptance of the political status quo was particularly widespread in the autonomous region of Galicia, including among the intelligentsia elites. However, the second half of the 19th century, the two or three decades after the January Insurrection's defeat, saw isolation from the partitioners as a standard among a considerable share of the nationally-aware inhabitants of the Russian and Prussian Partition. The partitioner authorities were almost never involved in internal Polish dissension;

58 Walentyna Nagórska, *Ze Szczawińskich Jadwiga Dawidowa (1865-1910)* ['Jadwiga Dawid, née Szczawińska, 1865-1910']; eadem, a biogram of J.S.-D. in the Polish Biographical Dictionary – *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 4, Kraków 1938, p. 464.

the line separating Poles from Russians and Germans was regarded, at least declaratively, as more important than the meanders of reciprocal aversions, pretences and prejudices. The last years of the century brought about a change in this respect.

The change was heralded by the denunciation of the socialist activist and theoretician Ludwik Waryński in 1879 in Krakow, by the owner of the printing house where socialist pamphlets were set. The denouncement, detention and the subsequent trial of Waryński (and his thirty-four associates) provided an impulse for the first public discussions on forming a united front of Polish people against their partitioners. The judgment was less severe as the Krakow court, as a means of protest against the Russian police's intervention in the course of the investigation, had issued unprecedentedly lenient sentences of short-term arrest and expulsion for the accused beyond Austro-Hungary's limits.

In the intelligentsia milieus, a scandal involving the Warsaw Charity Society twenty years later was on everyone's lips. In January 1898, the organisation's left-inclined majority forced the ultra-conservative chairman Prince Michał Radziwiłł to resign. In response to this, the right-wing press – especially *Rola*, edited by Jan Jeleński, and Archbishop Popiel's *Przegląd Katolicki* – accused the Society's new authorities of leading the workers and labourers astray and distributing 'subversive' literature among them; beside that, *Rola* made public the existence and the cast of an illegal Cataloguing Committee. Based upon this data, the authorities searched the book collections and had a few dozen people arrested, among them Ludwik Krzywicki, Adam Mahrburg, Andrzej Niemojewski and Stefania Sempołowska, who were afterwards sentenced each to a few months in prison.

> [Our society] has developed a political ethics correspondent with the conditions amidst which it had had to live and act. The precepts of this ethics have been strictly observed, not only with regard to the Russian Government but in our internal relations as well. […] The austere, often relentless, judgment of the opinion safeguarded the provisions of national morality, condemned all the offences against us, including those committed to the best of one's intent, in the will to serve the public cause. As a matter of course, the private relations often saw delinquencies against the ethics' canons, which would go unpunished or, in many cases, be consciously tolerated, as the necessary concessions to the requirements of practical life. There was, however, an untouchable sphere of national activity, not limited formally but commonly recognised. It was surrounded by the *holy furrow* in the conscience of the people-at-large, as imperceptible as the furrow that compassed the old Roma in its later times, but so solidified under voluntary consent that any instance of assault against it was deemed a sacrilegious act of treason.
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> Jan Ludwik Popławski, *Demoralizacja polityczna* ['Political demoralisation'], 'Przegląd Wszechpolski', 1898, quoted after: idem, *Pisma polityczne. Wydanie pośmiertne* ['Political writings. Posthumous edition'], Kraków-Warszawa 1910, vol. 1, pp. 106-107.

Polish opinion's response, from the left-wing press through to the opinions expressed in the Petersburg conservative weekly *Kraj*, was a concordant condemnation of the campaign conducted in the two magazines. Denunciation and the resulting provision of the partitioning government with arguments against Poles far transcended the rules of political struggle in a subjugated society. Common resentment was expressed in Warsaw through a boycott of *Rola* and *Przegląd Katolicki*, which lasted till 1905. The Charity Society's reading libraries affair ceased being of any relevance overnight by this same year, though.

The origins of the revolution that occurred at the beginning of the 20th century can be traced along several paths. In Russia, the massacre in Saint Petersburg on Sunday, 22nd January 1905, was the ignition. In Polish lands, the detonator was the workers' strike in the Warsaw district of Wola, which commenced on 26th January, or the ten weeks' earlier demonstration in Grzybowski Square, or 'Warsaw's bloody Sunday' of 29th January – chaotic clashes with troops which, as an eyewitness recollected, "made Warsaw a city by whose walls, or indeed inside them, a war was taking place"[59]. Of primary importance could have been the events of the real war fought in the Far East between Russia and Japan. The capitulation of Port Arthur fortress (2nd January 1905), the great battle of Mukden (late January/early February), and the smashing defeat of the fleet in the Tsushima Strait, between the island of Kyushu and Korea (27th-28th May) were the spectacular calamities that humiliated the Romanovs' Empire, revealing its astonishing deficiencies. Perhaps credit should go to the assassination of Vyacheslav von Plehve, committed by Russian radicals on 28th July 1904. Or, perhaps, one would have to refer back to the nineteenth century, with its whole tangle of people, ideas, occurrences, fears, irresolvable dilemmas, prejudices and festering grudges tended by entire social castes and entire nations and informing the public life of the Empire which was sometimes called 'a clay-legged giant'. Regardless, however, of where and when the ignition took place, the outbreak of the revolution, defined ever since as 'of the year 1905', proved unprecedentedly impetuous.

> 'Freedom — freeedoom — freeedoom!' — a workman cried, like mad, at a meeting. He drawled out this single word for several minutes in a moan. It was not a thought, nor was it the voice of reason or even of feeling; this was the first, almost inarticulate scream of a need that had long been violated, and finally found an outlet in a cry.
> Aleksander Świętochowski, *Liberum veto*, 'Prawda', 1905, no. 43/44: 22nd November

59 [Andrzej Niemojewski], *Listy Warszawskie* ['The Warsaw Letters'], 'Kurier Lwowski', 1905, no. 34, 3rd February.

Regardless of whether the above citation from a Świętochowski feuilleton recorded a real incident observed by the author, or if it is a product of literary fantasy, it perfectly renders Polish people's sentiments at the threshold of the events that would in the course of a few years harrow the Polish political scene and reinstate the sensitivity of society and, most of all, its intellectual elites.

The Revolution of 1905 was an inevitable social spasm, the "need that had long been violated, and finally found an outlet" among the subjects of the Russian Empire – a police state, a backward and stifling country that consistently suppressed any aspirations or daydreams exceeding the level of daily existence. The outbreak was catalysed by the defeats Russia had experienced in the war against Japan that it had declared in February 1904, which markedly demonstrated that the tsarist empire was not only backward and sultry but also distressfully inefficient, to the extent that, it could seem, a single precisely inflicted blow might actuate an unbounded process of disintegration. Enough to stretch your hand out, and the concessions and reforms that until recently appeared to be unrealistic reveries should be found at hand, it seemed.

1904 had already seen demonstrations and strikes going across the country, but it was only the 'Bloody Sunday' massacre in Petersburg, 22nd January 1905, that became the 'first shot of the Revolution'. The army unexpectedly attacked a grand parade of protesters carrying religious banners and uttering the Tsar's name – with the result being over a thousand killed, and double this figure wounded. Over the following days and weeks, the movement, like a forest fire, overwhelmed the whole country, reaching as far as the Vistula Country – Polish lands seized by Russia.

Warsaw saw its first great demonstration on 13th November 1904, in Grzybowski Square. After the Petersburg massacre, the incidents gained unprecedented acceleration there too: the January of 1905 and the following months were filled with demonstrations, rallies, skirmishes with military troops, provocations, commotions and, lastly, a general workers' strike launched in Warsaw four days after the 'Bloody Sunday'. In the Polish reality, the demands for political and social reforms were enriched with national postulates, slogans claiming liberty for the development of Polish culture and education, the demand to allow the Polish language in schools and in public life – and, of course, political autonomy. These were the foundations of the school strike proclaimed for 28th January at tertiary and secondary schools in Warsaw and, thereafter, in the provinces.

The common image of the Revolution of 1905 is usually limited to the aspect of workers' protests. This image, recorded in the paintings of Stanisław Lentz, and solicitously cultivated afterwards by the historiography of communist Poland (after World War two), reduced the occurrences of 1905-7 to the overused

cliché of a workman tearing a stone out of the metropolitan cobblestone pavement in order to throw it at a capitalist bloodsucker. Whilst not negating the significance of the year 1905 for the development of workers' parties, let it be reaffirmed that it appeared perhaps even more important for literature and arts, and to national culture in general; in particular, it impressed a stigma on the history of the Polish intelligentsia and the intellectual elites.

A large section of the cultural circles in the Russian Partition (especially people with leftist views or leanings) welcomed the events of January 1905 with sympathy, hope, and often with enthusiasm. In Warsaw, in the climate of general elation, memoranda were signed, with demonstrations and rallies organised. Following the greatest of them, held on 19th February at the Museum of Industry and Agriculture, the fathers and mothers of the students going on strike agreeably summoned: "1. the parents, not to send their children to a Russian school from now on; 2. the youth, not to frequent a Russian school any more". In the first months, people gasped with the breath of freedom, and the conviction prevailed that the whole of Polish society would soon unite (Edward Abramowski was one of those advocating a "universal collusion against the government"), and reach with a firm hand for what had been denied to them for over a century. For most observers, the striking students and workers – this 'people', mythologised and idealised at least since Mickiewicz – was a link in the chain of battles for independence, stronger and healthier than the previous links, a real guarantee of victory. In 1905, the 'people', to the applause of the intelligentsia, broke as if by storm into the pages of novels, the stanzas of pathetic poems, the canvasses of paintings, the matrixes of engravings and the boards of the theatrical stage. "Poetry fell to its knees before the genius of revolution, in a servile submersion", as Karol Irzykowski, the perspicacious critic, found soon after mockingly.

But the position of the genius was not challenged by anyone, for the time being. After all, the benefits to national culture came quick, and appeared substantial. The Tsar's ukase on religious tolerance of 30th April 1905 allowed switching from the Orthodox religion into another Christian confession – thus enabling a number of former Uniates, coerced after 1875 to convert to Orthodoxy, to turn to Catholicism (save for the Greek rite). The Polish language gained the status of the language of instruction at non-state schools. Preventive censorship was abolished on 7th November 1905: the press could at last write openly about the Polish past and, in a slightly camouflaged way, on national aspirations for the future. A chance was achieved for the legalisation of scores of cultural, educational, scientific, economic, co-operative, professional and environmental organisations.

Among the most important institutions was the Polish Educational Society (*Polska Macierz Szkolna*; approved 11th June 1906) which organised teaching and education, mostly at elementary level. The Society of Scientific Courses (legalised in November 1906) was no less significant: enjoying a tertiary school status, this institution was descended from the illegal 'Flying University' and was open for males and females alike. Women, aligning with men on the strike lines and demonstrations, seem, in any case, to have been the greatest beneficiaries of those events.

> The school strike had doubtless considerable influence upon the female youth. […] As I can remember, my female school mates, who at one time wouldn't have gone into the street without their mother beside them, and had their maid-servant carry the school-bag behind them, on the mademoiselle's way to the boarding school, now, liberated, were turning into independent maidens, socialitesses, and revolutionaries. They gained bravery, self-confidence, and confidence in the new life. They ever since became clearly aware that the whole world stood open before them but needs being conquered through hardships and struggle. Once graduated from their secondary schools, we shall see them one day as students at the universities in Krakow, Lwów, Geneva, Lausanne, and Paris.
> Romana Pachucka, *Pamiętniki z lat 1886-1914* ['Memoirs from 1886 to 1914'], Wrocław 1958, p. 59.

The increasingly larger communal assemblages in the Kingdom spontaneously established Polish as the official language at offices and educational institutions; preliminary schools, custody stations, reading rooms and libraries, especially those set up by the Polish Educational Society, operated on the basis of the general effort of members of the provincial and rural intelligentsia. In July 1907, the climax of the Society's activity, the number of its activists reached 20,000.

A great renaissance was experienced by Polish culture in the Stolen Lands where the Polish language had by then been completely ousted from public life – Polish periodicals, publications, community centres, associations, choirs, amateur theatre ensembles; a theatre run by Nuna Młodziejowska opened in Wilno to offer a patriotic repertoire. The initial swig of long-inexperienced latitude was followed by more – faster and faster, stronger and stronger, and, in growing numbers. "Even though we could revel in freedom", Świętochowski calmed the readers down, in his feuilleton quoted above, "a crazing mob that have vats of vodka dragged forth for them is what we shan't at all be."

The characteristic thing about revolutions is, however, that they have a life of their own, their own internal pace and, regardless of their leaders' expectations, have their own feedback. The years 1905-7 are an excellent illustration of this well-known truth. Following the first period of enthusiasm and unity that wiped out all social differences as well as those in the participants' world outlook, the

divisions in the Polish (just like in the Russian) political scene were growing with a logarithmical power, like successive degrees on the Richter scale.

It is impossible and pointless to present all those divisions in a book focusing on the history of the intelligentsia; even the most competent scholars appear helpless in the face of the throng of parties, larger and smaller, emerging, splitting and breaking up month by month, week by week. However, the most fundamental fissure – or fault-line (to reach for the earthquake poetics again) that appeared the most dramatic at the time, never being levelled ever since – was that between the Right and the Left. It finally struck out all the nineteenth-century ideas of the solidarity of the enslaved nation and of the common goals of all Polish men and women. The 1905-7 Revolution was the first to manifest a symptom of modernity in Polish lands. The mass parties that had been taking shape since the end of the 19th century – the socialists and the national democrats – all of a sudden gained an excellent laboratory where they could test their most courageous concepts at liberty. And, they used this opportunity uninhibitedly.

At the same time, the repressive measures applied by the authorities and the increasing tiredness of society – how many months can one remain frenetically exalted? – compelled the revolutionaries to alter their method of action. Rallies and parades did not any more suffice to mobilise the nation, to stand up against the army, to the gendarmerie, to the Okhrana (Russian political police), or against the enemies on the other side of the political palette.

The workers' parties on the Left and on the Right formed their own armed squads – to defend, and to attack; their brutal actions impressed an increasingly visible stamp on the public life of Warsaw, Łódź, Sosnowiec, and other industrial towns. A Combat Organisation affiliated to the Polish Socialist Party was formed. At a PPS convention held in November 1906 in Vienna, the party was split into the PPS-Revolutionary Fraction, formed of people associated with Piłsudski, and the socially more radical PPS-Left, which opted for collaboration with Russian revolutionaries and quit the short-term independence postulates. The National Workers' Union [NZR], a nationalist organisation, associated with the national democrats, founded in June 1905 and initially, ostentatiously, distancing itself from strikes and class warfare, was also growing radical. With time, however, the bloody clashes between the fighting groups of the NZR and the PPS became the daily practice of party life, which was the case especially for Łódź.

The first reckless actions of the Combat Organisation ignited the imagination of Poles and blended with the romanticist tradition of the nineteenth-century insurrections and uprisings. The most notorious of them were 'Bloody Wednesday', 15th August 1906, when PPS fighters killed seventy-two policemen and gendarmes; the attempt at Warsaw Governor-General Georgi Skalon, 18th August

1906, the bomb-thrower being Wanda Krahelska, a nineteen-year-old woman; the seizure of a cashbox in Opatów by Józef Montwiłł-Mirecki (5th August), and his later escape from a prison infirmary in Warsaw (October 1906). The news, suppositions and the craziest gossip on such incidents were spread by word of mouth. It did not quite matter that the Kingdom's highest-ranking Russian dignitaries and the most hated gendarmes were out of the attackers' reach; that the only effect of Krahelska's action was the bad humour and short-lived stunning of the Governor-General; that Montwiłł-Mirecki was finally caught, judged, and executed on the Warsaw Citadel slope. The legends were begotten on the pavement, and it seemingly would last for decades, like the images of the scythe-bearers' attack at the battle of Racławice, the Somosierra charge, the Ordon's Redoubt, or the capture of Romuald Traugutt in his hideout on Smolna Street.

The ruthlessness of the authorities only fomented such sentiments. Apart from the acts of audacity and recklessness, the legends were contributed to by the sufferings of the fighters, the prison cells, the court benches, Siberia, and the gallows. The gaols were filled in Warsaw and in the provinces. A chain of executions started: Stefan Okrzeja, a PPS member, and the perpetrator of the attempt at the Warsaw *oberpolitsmeister*, Baron Karl Nolken, was hanged on 21st January 1905. Marcin Kasprzak, a member of Social-Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania [SDKPiL], who a year earlier killed four policemen and wounded yet another, in a defensive struggle at a secret printing house on Dworska Street (today, Kasprzaka Street) in Warsaw, was hanged on 8th September. Henryk Baron, another member of PPS's Combat Organisation, executed another failed attempt at Governor Skalon and was hanged on 9th May 1907. And, lastly, Józef Montwiłł-Mirecki, that most dexterous warlord, responsible for unusual attacks on offices and mail cars, brushing with genius and bluster, was killed in the same fashion on 9th October 1908.

All of them joined the perennial pageant of Polish national heroes, struggling, with God or in spite of God – as Mickiewicz had put it three generations earlier – for the liberation of their homeland; the poetry and prose of the early 20th century wrote of them using the same stylistics with which the previous century's heroes were described. "I would have never dared daydream that I could grow up to […] a martyr's wreath", Okrzeja is reported to have said before his death[60], formulating almost the same message as Kordian, Konrad Wallenrod, General Sowiński at a small church by the ramparts of Wola, and the January 1863 heroes did.

60 Orwid [Gustaw Daniłowski], *Stefan Okrzeja*, Warszawa 1910, p. 21.

As the revolution progressed, however, bomb and dagger attacks, assaults on people and robberies of offices and apartments, so-called expropriations – grabbing the state money for party-related purposes, attacks on liquor stores or bawdy houses, and smashing attacks on Jewish shops gained the status of ordinary measures in the everyday struggle. In the small provincial towns or in the dark alleys of Warsaw or Łódź, the movement degenerated into completely criminal activities, any sublime justifications turned pointless, leaving behind them merely sneers, cynicism, dishonesty, and violence. The rivalry during the subsequent Duma election, with candidates from Polish lands running for deputies, added up to the picture.

Quite early, on 30th October 1905, Emperor Nicholas II declared his October Manifesto, that announced, among other things, the granting to his subjects of basic civic freedoms, including the establishment of the State Duma – the lower house of the Russian parliament. The first Duma (the so-called Bulygin Duma, after the Russian interior minister Alexander Bulygin) was not convened at all, due to mass protests against the formation of an institution whose prerogatives were so grotesquely restricted. In later years, the Second Duma was set up (March 1907; dissolved in June the same year), followed by the Third Duma (which persevered for almost five years, 1907-12) and then the Fourth one (opened November 1912). The left-wing parties consistently criticised the unjust electoral law and boycotted the elections or were positioned upfront as losers; hence, prevalent among Polish deputies in Petersburg were the National Democracy activists, with Roman Dmowski at the forefront. Although their measurable achievements were not big, the experiences of national-democratic Duma members were the first parliamentary experiences for Poles in the Russian Partition since the memorable session of the insurgent diet in Płock of 23rd September 1831: a few days later, most of its participants crossed the Prussian frontier, thus setting the seal on the fall of the November Insurrection.

> Should the Tauride edifice [the Duma residence in St. Petersburg] fall into ruins all of a sudden, with the deputies being killed amidst the ruins, Russia would suffer an irreparable loss in its science, literature and public life; we, having lost all our deputies, from the Kingdom and from Lithuania and Ruthenia alike, would incur a loss which individual families, parishes and counties would feel, but we would not thus incur nationwide losses. […] Our delegates appeared dull and bland. The specific personal weight of each of our deputies was the weight of provincial barristers grandiloquently reciting trivial threadbare clichés.
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> Władysław Studnicki, *Pierwsza Duma Państwowa i działalność naszych posłów* ['The first State Duma and the activities of our deputies'], Warszawa 1907, p. 9.

Meanwhile, with each subsequent election campaign, reciprocal accusations and invectives were growing increasingly harsh and ruthless. Anti-Semitic phraseology was particularly expressive and far-ranging, becoming one of the essential instruments of political struggle for the National Democracy. All that occurred in the name of 'love of the homeland', 'care for the social interest', 'the good of the people', 'the tomorrow of Poland' – until the like phrases became "empty sounds, resembling the swish of an autumnal wind" (Świętochowski). Publicists and men of letters who placed revolutionaries and revolutions on a pedestal in 1905, now either personally took part in skirmishes spewing invectives, charges and libels, or watched them with embarrassment, or, for a change, repeated other reasonable and commonplace warnings that nobody wanted to listen to any more. Bolesław Prus best represents the latter attitude: this author and man whose merits of several decades before were not to be underestimated, still endeavoured to educate and perfect his fellow countrymen like he had been doing for three decades, albeit with no more hope to succeed. Still, the smooth truths like: "Life would be petrified without the youth and its gusts; but, without a prudent senescence, spiritual life would turn into a cloud changing its shape every moment, its persistence being reduced to minutes"; or: "A genuine revolutionary ought to make use of voluntary concord, instead of violence; of persuasion, instead of a browning; of benevolence, instead of hatred. This is what Christ, the greatest revolutionist of all time, did" – were but a swish of wind irritating the nerves.

Two events in particular made the Polish intelligentsia realise that the national unity of January 1905 was only apparent and all the actors of the political scene were striving for their own aims, none of them signifying the independence of Poland. The first was an incident in the Czemierniki settlement, in the Lublin *Guberniya*, where on 5th August 1906 the local peasants attacked and beat to death with clubs the PPS messengers who came there in connection with the strike. The association with the massacre of forty years earlier in the Ukrainian village of Sołowijówka, where in May 1863 about a dozen insurgents were thumped with scythes and flails, was inevitable. This time, however, the young canvassers did not fall victim to Orthodox peasants instigated by the Russian authorities: instead, the attackers were Catholic and Polish peasants, induced by local clergy and national activists. As Stanisław Brzozowski wrote with derisive bitterness, "Czemierniki marks a victory of the Polish soul, impetuous and rustic, over a pestilence of an alien tribe. […] The hard Polish fist has already done enough work on the alien service; our own enemy is here, at home. Czemierniki, the field for one's own triumphs."[61]

61 Stanisław Brzozowski, *Czemierniki*, 'Przegląd Społeczny', 1906; as reprinted in: idem, *Opętane zegary* ['Obsessed clocks'], pp. 94-95.

The other, even more renowned and painful experience was that of summoning Russian troops by many factory-owners (especially in Łódź) to fight demonstrating workers, and in particular the lock-out of Łódź – the sacking of several thousand workers who went on strike at the end of 1906 and the beginning of 1907. This was the end of the dream of any common front of Poles against the partitioner. The late months of the revolution were only marked by bloodier and bloodier assassinations, of Russians and Poles alike; by banditry sweeping over the remote provinces and in dull recesses of big cities, attacks on apartments and manors, and despicable denunciations. On the other hand, there were intimidating descriptions of the police harassing detainees and prisoners, regardless of their age and sex, and of convicts being executed. In parallel, a number of Kingdom towns saw riots from the Mariavites, the religious movement that had left the Roman-Catholic Church, claiming the need for moral renovation and now struggled with it for believers, temples and parishes, frequently enjoying support from the Russian authorities. Cruelty was blended with heroism, tragedy and pathos with pitiable ridiculousness, genuine grandeur with the most disgusting moral collapse.

All those activities went on, virtually from the first days of the revolution, to the accompaniment of unabating charges of treason, espionage, and provocation; of political, national and religious apostasy. Ever since the late 18th century, all the moments of threat, breakthrough, the revaluation of heritage ideals, had resulted in campaigns of charges and accusations like those, and in fierce attacks on traitors. In 1905, the figures of betrayers and renegades – provokers, agents, spies, informers, rats, and the like – populated the collective imagination, were evoked at workers' rallies and secret party meetings, made lasting headlines in the press (legal or not), and were turned into favourite characters in literary works. Almost all the authors who faced the revolutionary subject-matters at that time made such abhorrent traitors the indispensable part of their pieces. This did reflect the reality, on the one hand, since secret service and provocation were the Okhrana's ordinary measures of combating the workers' parties. On the other hand, it resulted from the increasing fever of mutual distrust, which was best described by Stefan Żeromski in his play *Róża*, aptly called "a piece of news from the bottom of the Polish hell"[62].

62 Stanisław Brzozowski, *Skarga to straszna (Rzecz o „Róży" Józefa Katerli)* ['That's an awful complaint. On *Róża* by Józef Katerla {Żeromski's penname}'], 1910; as reprinted in: idem, *Eseje i studia o literaturze* ['Essays and studies on matters literary'], ed. H. Markiewicz, Wrocław 1990, vol. 2, p. 1061.

In the introductory section of these considerations on the Revolution, there was mentioned an apostrophe to Sacred Freedom, shouted out aloud and noted down by Świętochowski in 1905. Exactly twelve months later, he resumed this subject, in another feuilleton: "I have always treated Freedom as a goddess", wrote this patron of progressive journalism, "and here she appeared as a drunken, vulgar slut, lashing every passer-by with a raw-hide whip…"[63] The same label, of a public prostitute, was used against the Polish intelligentsia by the publicists of both the Right and the Left.

> Polish intelligentsia! Staring tranquilly, stupefied in the philistine fashion, over the long years at the symptoms – bursting out, all of a sudden, upon the surface of their bland and lame life – of the struggle fought by the Polish revolutionaries with the most ferocious, cruel violence. They were like a public trollop waiting to see the result of the combat betwixt that unknown novel man wearing a worker's blouse, his hands tough and blackened, and the tsarist hireling; it seemed to them – to that harlot, dispirited by its own impotence, that if that novel one, the alien one, should win, she would regain her virginity in his hugs. […] All this now belongs to the past. By today, even the harlot's dream of Platonism has become a lost peak to the broadest masses of the possessing, reflective, frock-coat-wearing, poetising Poland.
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> Stanisław Brzozowski, *Trąd wszechpolski* ['The all-Polish leprosy'], 'Promień', 1906, no. 8-10 (quoted after: idem, *Opętane zegary. Wybór publicystyki społeczno-politycznej z lat 1905-1907* ['Obsessed clocks. Selected social-political commentaries and journalistic pieces'], ed. A. Mencwel, Warszawa 1986, pp. 98-99)

What the Poles did with their freedom in 1905 and in the following years became one of the most, and longest, inspiring moments in Polish literature. The wave of works relishing (the) revolution over, now time came for square-up, bitter pieces, some of them very distressing and piercingly wise, though not all of them were artistically the most outstanding achievements for their authors. Polish society as portrayed by Żeromski in *Róża*, by Wacław Berent in *Ozimina*, or by Prus in *Dzieci* ['Children'] is a collective that finds itself unable to cope with the greatest challenges and to materialise its most illustrious hopes. This image cannot be undermined by the tragic and admirable characters from the novels of Andrzej Strug or Gustaw Daniłowski. Rapture and disillusionment, enthusiasm and bitterness, great expectations and lost illusions: such was the image of the 1905-7 Revolution that was preserved in Polish literature for several dozen subsequent years, until the Second World War. The most unerring and concise description of the Revolution experience came from the literary critic Karol Irzykowski, who wrote in 1908: "Young Poland had gone grey overnight; a hangover all along the

63 Aleksander Świętochowski, *Liberum veto*, 'Prawda', 1906, no. 45: 10th November.

line".[64] To paraphrase these words, one may say that the whole Polish intelligentsia had gone grey.

This post-revolutionary hangover was even augmented by later events: the withdrawal of the Russian authorities from a considerable part of the concessions granted to Poles in the years 1905-7, the election struggle, the growing anti-Semitism. After the spasm of revolution, it was difficult to go back to the old ruts of life, and the awakened hopes and emotions did not disappear traceless. The change in the sentiments was most severely experienced by women – intellectuals, students, and activists involved peculiarly in the 1905-7 events – who aligned the ranks formed by males and gloried in their sense of complete equality. These women found it particularly hard to reacclimatise to the traditional, patriarchal model of everyday life. An extreme case of such a dilemma, shared at that moment by a number of educated women, was Marcelina Kulikowska (1872-1910) – a poetess, an author of poems and novels inspired by the 1905 Revolution, and a teacher at a Krakow female gymnasium. Discouraged by the disuse of the until-recently-valid slogans and ideals, alienated in the conservative environment of Krakow (her overtly declared atheism was regarded as ubecoming of the profession of teacher), she eventually committed suicide.

The growing frustration was bitterly crowned by the case of Stanisław Brzozowski – yet another link in the long chain of treason accusations. His name was found on the list of secret agents of the Okhrana, published by the socialist press in 1908. Brzozowski denied these accusations and affected the convocation of three successive tribunals of public opinion in Krakow in 1909, none of which proved able to either confirm or refute the charges. The problem of Brzozowski's guilt divided the Polish intelligentsia, aroused strong emotions and mutual hostility within the party, among friends and even inside families. Among the most ardent defenders and the most fervent opponents of the writer were several illustrious Polish intellectuals, such as Stefan Żeromski, Zofia Nałkowska, Karol Irzykowski, Andrzej Niemojewski, Bolesław Limanowski and Mieczysław Limanowski. In the midst of these disputes, Brzozowski, then severely afflicted by tuberculosis, died in exile in Florence, in the spring of 1911.

The 'Brzozowski case' that was not solved at that time became a painful experience for everybody, both his accusers and defenders, and embroiled – in the opinion of one author of memoirs – "not only the whole revolutionary

64 Karol Irzykowski, *Dwie rewolucje* ['The two revolutions'], 'Nasz Kraj', 1908; as reprinted in: idem, *Czyn i słowo. Glossy sceptyka* ['By action and by word. A sceptic's glosses'], Kraków 1980, p. 183.

movement, but even the revival-seeking strivings for an independent Poland".[65] From the perspective of the hundred years that have since elapsed and the discoveries of researchers, Brzozowski's innocence has been finally confirmed, and his 'Case' appears as a tragic and grotesque example of a vile campaign unleashed on the basis of libel, ill will and a tangle of political interests in which Polish history abounded not only at the time of Partitions.

Among the further consequences of 1905, we should mention the otherwise comprehensible state of discouragement and apathy, characteristic of Polish society in the Russian Partition in the last years before the outbreak of World War One; the society's indifference to the slogans of the struggle for independence in 1914; and, above all, the sense of mutual rancour, estrangement and hostility that prevailed among the Polish intellectuals both of the Left and the Right.

It needs being reminded, in conclusion, that the Revolution of 1905-7 directly affected only part of the Polish lands, although it strongly echoed in the other partitioned territories as well. In the Poznań Province and in Pomerania, a strike of community-school students, claiming their right to religious instruction taught in Polish, broke out in autumn 1906, quite plainly influenced by its model – the school strike in the Kingdom. Their postulate was not satisfied, and the Prussian repressions – the penalties of fines and detention for the parents of the defiant children – finally suppressed the strike a few months later.

In Galicia, the revolutionary events in the Kingdom rendered political life evidently more radical. A wave of demonstrations and strikes swept through the country, there was even the menace that revolution could spill over the Russian Empire's frontiers, marching westwards. The protesters in Krakow, Lwów, or in smaller Galician towns, expressed out loud their support for the revolutionary occurrences behind the cordon. The street rallies had clear anti-Russian overtones; during one such mass meeting, at the foot of the Mickiewicz Monument in Krakow, Ignacy Daszyński, the leader of the Polish Social-Democratic Party, burnt a portrait of Tsar Nicholas II, to the accompaniment of the song *The Red Banner*, sung by the crowd. However, the most essential question for the populace of Galicia and, likewise, the entire Habsburg Monarchy, was the demands for a reform of the election law. The new regulations were enacted in January 1907; albeit they abolished the former division into electoral curiae, which favoured the conservatives, they granted no voting rights to women and to individuals obtaining allowances from public funds. It is not the strikes, meetings and parades that ought to be recognised as the Revolution's most significant repercussion in

65 Michał Sokolnicki, *Czternaście lat* ['The fourteen years'], Warszawa 1936, p. 355.

the Galician reality, but the setting up, in 1905, of the 'Zielony Balonik' cabaret, which was the gauntlet thrown down against the parochialism of the society of Galicia and, in particular, Krakow.

Let us emphasise, at last, that the breakthrough of 1905-7 proves observable and interpretable in a variety of ways. Thus, it may have been the first mass scale protest of workers in Poland and Russia, and an important caesura in the history of the workers' movement; this was the interpretation that was consistently proposed years ago; albeit not quite groundless, it seems that its intellectual capacity has mostly been exhausted. Or, it was the moment in Polish history (the first such, again – and nowise the last) when the strictly national postulates were not only interwoven with the social ones but quite often gave way to them: historians have proved unable, till this day, to give a convincing response to whether it was "the fourth insurrection, or the first revolution".[66] Or, it offered a repository of examples for human fortitude, heroism and devotion, and, in parallel, a panopticon of stupidity, vain jabber, weakness, treason, and misdemeanour. Or, it may have been an event within a great flood of incidents which in that period affected the world's imagination – along with the eruption of Vesuvius, the earthquake in San Francisco, the first formulation by Albert Einstein of his special theory of relativity, the discovery of the pox bacterium, or the brawl of the Köpenick captain (Wilhelm Voigt) which stimulated the penmen's imaginativeness. To end with, the Revolution of 1905 can, and indeed ought to be, approached as the turning point in the history of the Polish intelligentsia and intellectual elites; yet-another lesson of accountability for the words uttered in public, for reveries woven with a completely loosened grip on reality, and for hastiness in the tracking of new routes.

6. Being a Polish twentieth-century intellectual in Poznań, Krakow and Warsaw

As I have repeatedly emphasised, the spectrum of opportunities, aspirations and achievements of the Polish intelligentsia, with a hundred years of partitioned country behind them, varied by province and period. A sense of unity between members of this stratum, regardless of the Partition area, has also been remarked on, no less emphatically. The beginning of the 20th century was certainly the moment when the sense of fellowship in one's situation and identity was particularly

66 Cf. Stanisław Kalabiński, Feliks Tych, *Czwarte powstanie, czy pierwsza rewolucja. Lata 1905-1907 na ziemiach polskich* ['The fourth uprising, or the first revolution? The years 1905-7 in the Polish lands'], Warszawa 1969.

deep among intellectuals. However, dissimilarities between the provinces had become evident by that time, to the degree enabling one to discern between the different types of Polish intellectual to have emerged under the Prussian, Austrian and Russian authorities.

Intellectuals from the geographically most peripheral and most endangered 'branches' of the Polish cultural community had certainly the most difficult task to tackle: those in Grodno or Wilno in the east, or those in Poznań and the other Prussian-Partition towns in the western borderland.

> Let us take a look a'round ourselves. Our Silesia is Germanised; the West Prussia permeated here and there with the alien nationality; the G.[rand] Duchy's western boundary counties have been flooded by the German populace. And who could vouch to us that, with a longer passage of time, this same population would not suffuse the remainder of the Poznań Duchy? Verily, those who can merely believe shall not be able to give us any warrant against the doom so austere. […] Belief shall not save us, but saved shall we be through what is knocking us – and that is, labour and political reason.
> Roman Szymański, *O siłach moralnych w ustroju społecznym* ['The moral strengths in a social system'], Poznań 1870; quoted after: *Droga do niepodległości czy program defensywny? Praca organiczna – programy i motywy* ['The way to regain independence, or a defensive scheme? Organic work, its programmes and motifs'], ed. T. Kizwalter, J. Skowronek, Warszawa 1988, p. 181.

The Polish intelligentsia of Poznań – to say nothing of the cities and towns of Pomerania, Varmia, or Silesia – always had a sense of its own weakness and the daily, ever-increasing menace related to the civilisational and economic activity of the German element, impending not just on them but on all Prussian Poles. Still, albeit so scarce and dependent on the impersonal directives of the alien authorities as well as upon the financial and prestigious support from the Polish landed gentry, this intelligentsia proved capable of formulating and enforcing a programme of organic work on society's material growth, and of uniting this whole society to save Poznań and Wielkopolska (the Greater Poland) for the Poles.

However, this success was redeemed with a great cost, and was perhaps a sort of Pyrrhic victory. As Polish national identification would not be seen to be withdrawing in the Poznań Province at the beginning of the 20th century – conversely, the trend proved quite successful locally – a prevailing portion of the dwellers of the western and northern peripheries of the pre-Partition Commonwealth identified themselves with the German element. Apart from Gdansk, Toruń/Thorn and Piła/Schneidemühl, towns such as Leszno/Lissa or Olsztyn/Allenstein were gradually losing their character from before the Partition disaster. The intellectual elite of Poznań, the city and the Province, paid the price for remaining pushed aside to the provincial outskirts, crusted in the narrow space of their

own province, experiencing backwardness in the face of the general European trends and accusations of intellectual evisceration. The efforts made in the field of economy and the restricted national aspirations, this being combined with fighting patriotic manifestations deemed overly radical, and thus dangerous to the general public, all implied the imminence (clearly identified by commentators from the other provinces, and by some Wielkopolska locals too) of "whether what should only be the means to an end is perhaps gradually but steadily turning into the end alone".[67]

With this being the context, a Polish intellectual of Galicia – particularly, the west of Galicia – found his life the easiest-going and the most successful, whether in the scholarly/scientific, pedagogic, or social area, compared to his peers elsewhere. Polish universities and the most authoritative research institutions operated only there. The school system at all levels was Polonised and remained under the control of a Polish institution called the Home School Council. And, it was there that exponents of the elite found the best opportunities to forge their intents into the reality of public life – which was enabled especially by the electoral reform of 1907. Ever since, a civil society could be formed in Galicia, close to what we understand by this phrase today, although with the aforementioned electoral-law limitations. The aftermath was that the people became strongly emotionally bound with their venues of maturation, residence and activity; with their small, even if smallest, fatherland, which was recollected tenderly years afterwards in their memoirs.

> The town, or country town, of Myślenice has something to it that resembles the unconcerned charm of a basket of strawberries spilled over in the grass, for its houses are red, its roofs small and, usually, scattered in the green. […] The market-square is clean-and-tidy, the trees strolling amidst the market's sides are polite, well-bred and even better made. […] A book-store and a pharmacy have seated back beside it: the two foci of culture and two forgeries of gossiping. Beside them the municipality building stood, and Lord Mayor dwelled. A really short side street-neck would lead you to the gate of a red church. The church stood aside, as if keeping order, ready at any moment to march in, there being any such need.
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> J. Sztaudynger, *Szczęście z datą wczorajszą* ['Happiness dated yesterday'], Kraków 1974, pp. 84-85.

The array of opportunities that opened up for the Galician intelligentsia and the paths along which they fulfilled their professional, intellectual, political and social potential were spreading in an impressively broad manner; let us refer, by

67 Kazimierz Puffke, *Pół wieku* ['Half a century'], in: *„Dziennik Poznański" 1859-1909*, Poznań 1909, p. 23.

means of example, to the case of two county towns in Western Galicia – Rzeszów and Nowy-Sącz. In the first years of the 20th century, both were home to land/country and territorial/self-government institutions which offered permanent jobs to educated people: county councils, county offices (district starosties), municipalities, tax offices, treasury boards, circuit courts and notariates. Each of the towns housed two state male gymnasia (high schools) and one each private female gymnasium (inaugurated in 1907 and 1911 in Nowy-Sącz and Rzeszów, respectively), along with technological schools. Printing houses and bookstores operated and the local press was released in both. Social-and-cultural associations flourished in both Rzeszów and Nowy-Sącz: there was a casino attended by local intellectuals, a branch of the 'Sokół' Gymnastics Society (since 1886 in Rzeszów, a year later in Nowy-Sącz), amateur theatrical ensembles, choirs, and libraries. Finally, the well-off intelligentsia of both these towns enjoyed an animated social life, meeting one another in their salons within tenement houses by the high streets, at the theatre or the cinematograph, launching new fashionable favourite pastimes (Sunday outings out of town, the games of bowls, cricket and tennis), and staying in touch with the local landowners.

Yet, the hierarchical nature of social relations in Galicia – with, particularly, the dominant position of the aristocracy and the Catholic clergy – determined the position of the intelligentsia and its dependence upon the title-bearing strata. "The intelligentsia is an infant swaddled in politics and nobility culture", Franciszek Bujak complained when describing the realities of the country's western counties, Krakow in particular.[68] These bonds were found weaker in the capital city of Lwów, where, in turn, the top prestige was attached to the posts held with the land administration, with its prevalent spirit of feudalism, idolatric passion for ranks and titles, and aversion for any manifestations of individualism. In such a caste-based, still-standing world, a rank-and-file scribe with tenure mattered more than a penetrating writer or enterprising social activist, a Galician publicist diagnosed. "Without a permanent post, in Galicia you are mostly a social pariah, a chaff they would knock down and cross out from any serious reckoning."[69]

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Galician intelligentsia tended to be accused of a lack of individualism, a dependency upon authority structures and the fashion-dictating aristocracy or the clergy hierarchs. The decade preceding World War One, with its notorious accomplishments of the Krakow artistic bohemia, modified this picture to an extent. It remains incontrovertible, though,

68 Franciszek Bujak, *Galicya*, vol. 1, Lwów-Warszawa 1908, p. 194.

69 Ernest Łuniński, *Biurokracja* ['The bureaucracy'], 'Tydzień', 1902, no. 17.

that, given the scale of the whole Polish territory, the Austrian Partition's intelligentsia had amassed the greatest experience in performing unhampered activities in a variety of public fora, including the parliamentary forum. Outside Galicia, the comparable experience remained incomplete, crippled, charged with a sense of impotence and a complex of Polish helplessness against the invaders' metropolises. The land parliament of Lwów and the parliament in Vienna offered the educated Poles an opportunity to really learn the idea and practice of parliamentarism; they could really learn how to represent their voters and the whole country, and how to be accountable for their own words.

The Russian Partition is the hardest to tackle as far as rating the intelligentsia's attitudes in the early years of the 20th century is concerned. It was in this province that the Polish intelligentsia was the strongest number-wise, committed the grossest errors and the most obvious instances of negligence, whilst proving capable of moving up to heights unachievable elsewhere.

On the verge of the 20th century, after over a hundred years of the partitions and several painful defeats, lessons and disappointments, the Stolen Lands and the Vistula Country had become an integral part of the state of the Romanovs, as was the case with Polish multinational provinces in the Hohenzollern or Habsburg monarchies. Polish intellectual elites of the Russian Partition suffered from these same diseases as the Russian elites of the Empire: deprivation, compared to the West; an eternal uncertainty of word and existence; a humiliating dependence on ordinary *tchinovniks*; with bribery as, habitually, the best method of putting the reality in order.

Still, not only did the Polish intelligentsia of the Russian Partition assume responsibility for its nation but it proved best capable of drawing from the achievements of Europe, seemingly so distant then. The Polish intelligentsia from behind the cordons setting the limits of civilisation – those from Kielce, Kalisz, Lublin, Płock and, especially, Warsaw – was able to reconcile the highest intellectual challenges with social duties; basic, organic work with work in the heights; artsy-dreamership with social/welfare work.

This tough symbiosis was best illustrated by the figure of Aleksander Głowacki: the man who valued his own literary efforts so low that he was ashamed to sign his pieces with his real name, creating a 'Bolesław Prus' to this end instead. The man who assessed mathematics and music the highest, and who realised a superiority in the natural sciences over the humanities, considering any social activity to be incomparably more in demand than the Romanticists' impulses of heart and fruits of literary inspiration – and afterwards gained an unchallenged place in the Polish literary pantheon. The man who for many years claimed the powerfulness of reason and the need to work on one's own intellectual and ethical

potential – but entered his adult life as a soldier with the insurgent 'party', and in his late years witnessed the vainness of the principles he once propagated. The man who was probably the most popular celebrity in the Warsaw of the late 19th century, but could not evade a battering given by a group of students, enraged by his commonsensical critique of their patriotic zeal.[70] The teacher of the whole of society, through his weekly chronicles – *Kroniki Tygodniowe*, published by the most popular Warsaw magazines, always recommending modesty, laboriousness and the noble *mediocritas*, until the eve of Port Arthur's capitulation and in spite of a decline in the epoch he had domesticated for himself. In the first years of the 20th century, young intellectuals from the Left and the Right rejected most of his recommendations: all the same, more or less consciously, have they become living proof of the perspicacity and efficiency of the actions and the words of Aleksander Głowacki/Bolesław Prus and his contemporaries.

70 B. Prus once expressed, in *Nowiny* of 17th March 1878, his virulent criticism of the behaviour of the young people who had hissed off Włodzimierz Spasowicz's lecture on the poet Wincenty Pol – and was beaten by the students in response.

Chapter 6: The Polish intelligentsia in Europe. The influence of pan-European trends on Poland

1. Polish milieus in foreign lands

The existence of immensely important opinion-forming milieus outside the country, in the emigration (as a broad concept), was the factor of essence that informed the shape and reach of cultural, intellectual or scientific Polishness during the whole Partition period. The phenomenon was first recorded before the final collapse of the First Republic (i.e. the Commonwealth), with the first wave of emigration of Polish elites to Saxony and to the west of Europe, following the defeat in the war with Russia in 1792, and the abolition of the Third-of-May Constitution. In the course of the subsequent century, the emigration always co-created, and indeed even dictated, in certain periods, the shape of Polish intellectual and artistic life. While in the former half of the 19th century, determined outside the divided country were the most important findings in the domain of literature and, to an extent, other fine arts and political thought, after 1870, once higher scientific institutions were abolished in the Kingdom of Poland, a number of important scientific milieus gathered in exile, along with student, artistic, journalistic, and political environments. As a social and cultural phenomenon, Polish emigration subsequently lasted till the beginning of the 21st century, at least. Clearly, it was not a specifically Polish phenomenon, but rather, a trait typical to all the nations destitute of their own sovereign state and peripheral in relation to the centres – particularly, to the neighbouring nations of this part of Europe. Ukrainians, Slovaks, Croatians and, especially, eastern-European Jews moved in the same directions and, usually, for the same reasons.

In a way that was as if natural, a result of over a hundred years of dependence, the Polish intelligentsia clustered in the capital towns of the partitioning states, especially when university or scientific institutions were abolished in the Polish territory: in Petersburg, Berlin, and in Vienna too. Those imperial metropolises of Central/Eastern Europe of the late 19th/early 20th century sucked in a number of active individuals from the peripheries of their empires, much like ancient Rome did in its Republic and Empire era. No jobs, no subsistence, the will to get educated, supraparticular ambition, talents of international rank, or, in some cases, mere careerism, were among the reasons why educated Poles were pushed out to the East and to the West – to the centres. Such departures were often

stigmatised as national treason and religious denial (as discussed earlier). The Polish community of Petersburg, Berlin or Vienna rarely considered themselves dissenters or dropouts: very many of them tried to maintain bonds with the Polish environment and the country of their origin, co-creating their own quarters, districts and communities in the big metropolises of Europe. Apart from permanent or long-term immigration, shorter stays abroad became increasingly frequent at some point, aimed at acquiring education, or further education. In the latter half of the 19th century and, especially, in the first years of the 20th, such experience was shared by dozens of thousands of Polish scientists and scholars, men of letters and students. Witold Molik, an expert in this field, says that in 1914 alone, the higher schools of the three partitioning countries and in the west of Europe had more than 12,000 young Poles attending at the same time.

Immediately after the January Insurrection was suppressed, Polish public activities in Russia became as hindered as they were in the Kingdom of Poland. This was experienced particularly severely in Petersburg, which before 1863 was a living centre of Polish scientific, ideational/ideological and social life. "Today, the blood has got as if congealed in the veins of our Poles who are vegetating rather than living", a Petersburg correspondent of the Warsaw magazine *Chwila* wrote in 1886.[71] However, it was from the 1880s that the situation started changing. In 1882, the first issue of *Kraj*, the already-said opinion-forming weekly, was published in Petersburg; the following year saw the first production of a non-permanent Polish theatre staged. A daily named *Dziennik Petersburski* was issued; editorial houses, bookstores, and philanthropic institutions operated, serving the needs of the Polish community which on the verge of World War One numbered more than 60,000 people. A network of private houses crystallised where the Polish intelligentsia gathered in the city on the Neva, with leading roles played by the two editors of *Kraj*, the men of completely different backgrounds but identical conciliatory political stances: Włodzimierz Spasowicz, a lawyer of Orthodox confession, born on the banks of the Dnieper, and Erazm Piltz, a Lutheran from Warsaw.

Petersburg – as well as Moscow and other university hubs, especially Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa, Dorpat, Riga, and Kazan – saw a throng of Polish students, scientists and scholars of various specialities and artists come and go, or stay for longer, as they sought university chairs, laboratories, ateliers and lecture opportunities

71 *Listy znad Newy* ['Letters from the city on the Neva], 'Chwila', 1886, no. 56; quoted after: Ludwik Bazylow, *Polacy w Petersburgu* ['The Poles in Petersburg'], Wrocław 1984, p. 285.

deeper inside the Empire. This came as a clear consequence of the closure of tertiary schools in Wilno and Warsaw, and of the low standard of teaching at the Russian-language Warsaw University, several expulsions of Polish students from it in the late 19th/early 20th century, and its boycott by the Polish youth after 1905. Among the very numerous Polish scientists and creative artists working in Russia in the late 19th and early 20th century, let us name Jan Baudouin de Courtenay, the linguist of international calibre (associated with the universities of Petersburg, Kazan and Dorpat); Tadeusz Zieliński, the classical philologist; Leon Petrażycki, a lawyer; the painters Henryk Siemiradzki, Wojciech Gerson, Stanisław Noakowski and Ferdynand Ruszczyc, Stefan Szyller, an architect, or Pius Weloński, a sculptor. Belonging to this group were Polish physicians, engineers (the most famous being Stanisław Kierbedź, mentioned above), economic activists and – after 1906 – Polish deputies with the Duma. All of them in the course of their studies and careers in Russia remained closely related to the Russian milieus, but most of their major works were prepared and made in Poland, and for Poland. The end to this 'Polish academic diaspora' was put by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the construction of the independent Second Republic of Poland. An estimated 120-plus Polish professors working in Russian schools returned home at that point.

The inflow of Polish students to the Russian tertiary schools was massive. The universities and technological colleges of Petersburg, Moscow and other cities formed a natural place for studying, particularly, for Poles from the Stolen Lands. No less natural was at that time the contact between Polish and Russian students, whose consequence was the participation of Poles in the Russian revolutionary movement – including in the failed preparations of an attempt at Tsar Alexander III in 1887 (with the resulting deportation of Józef Piłsudski and his brother Bronisław into exile). Finally, Petersburg became the Russian Empire's first centre offering women an opportunity to study: the Female Medical Institute of Petersburg opened in 1897; the Pharmaceutical School for Women functioned from 1913-16, founded and run by Antonina Leśniewska, a Pole, the Empire's first woman holding the degree of Master of Pharmacy. In parallel, as was remarked in Chapter 3, nationalist activists residing in Poland openly criticised studying in Russia as an instrument of denationalisation, socialist indoctrination and demoralisation of the Polish youth of both sexes. Schools like the Veterinary Institute and, especially, the University in Dorpat (today, Tartu in Estonia) were perceived otherwise, as their liberal authorities were co-formed by the Livonian Germans. The large group of Polish students there joined the student corporation 'Polonia', and they were not subject to strong pressure from Russian culture. As a result, many a Dorpat student from Poland played in time an outstanding role in the country's life.

> Dorpat was at that time a German city with Tchukhon suburbs, a republic governed by the *bursh*es – that is, the students. What kind of institutions or municipal authorities were there? A lord-mayor? etc. – no one of us would have cared. It was a German colony within the Russian state, upon a Tchukhon, that is, Estonian, people's substratum. Muscovites appeared rarer there compared even to Warsaw; the officials came from the Baltic Germans. The town constituted as if a frame, or scaffolding, for the students' republic governed by the University's *Alma Mater*. The remainder of the population, immensely more numerous, was an annex to the University.
> Józef Weyssenhoff, *Wspomnienia z Dorpatu (1879-1884)* ['My memories from Dorpat, 1879-84'], in: Konstanty M. Górski, Józef Weyssenhoff, *Z młodych lat. Listy i wspomnienia* ['From our young years. Letters and recollections'], ed. I. Szypowska, Warszawa 1985, p. 405.

Talking about clusters of educated Poles in Russia, one cannot neglect the Siberian hubs to which participants of the January Insurrection and of the radical plots of the late 19th/early 20th century were deported. For some of them, Tomsk, Krasnoyarsk and, particularly, Irkutsk were but a temporary place of coerced stay; however, many, having no possibility to return, set up their families and sometime afterwards made their contributions to the economic, artistic and scientific life of Siberia. And, it was Poles – the deportees as well as volunteers – that have played an essential part in the research into autochthonic people, the flora, fauna and mineral resources of the Far East. Benedykt Dybowski (1833-1930), a zoologist and a physician sentenced to exile for his contribution to the Insurrection, conducted team research on the Baikal fauna, initially as a deportee and afterwards on a voluntary basis, gathering around himself a group of Polish naturalists and talented devotees. Wacław Sieroszewski (1858-1945), a writer, ethnographer and independence activist, deported in 1880 for his participation in L. Waryński's socialist organisation, devoted himself to studies of the Yakutian people. Sentenced in 1887 to fifteen years of *katorga*, Bronisław Piłsudski (1866-1918) undertook pioneering studies on the language and culture of the Ayn and Gilyak peoples populating the Sakhalin peninsula. At the same time, there was a number of Poles who engaged in research activities without being coerced to go into exile, and helped create a modern scholarly description of Siberia and the Caucasus.

The Polish community in Vienna was of a completely different character. From the 1870s onwards, it mostly consisted of workers and labourers, students, government agency officials and clerks, as well as aristocrats. On the eve of World War One, some 50,000 Poles inhabited Vienna and thereabouts. The community's small elite met at salons kept by the leading Polish politicians – to name Leon Biliński, Florian Ziemiałkowski, or Julian Dunajewski – and in elegant places in the Austrian capital's downtown: the Pucher cafe or the Erzherzog

Karl hotel restaurant. Political and personal matters were discussed in those venues, including the policies of the Polish Deputies' Group, and social gossip was exchanged. The opposite strand was formed of wine bars and student clubs, the most popular one being the 'Ognisko' Polish Academic Association, established in 1864.

Polish professors took up the chairs at Austrian universities, primarily in Vienna and Graz, but there were many less candidates than in Russia. Galicia had its own tertiary schools in Krakow and Lwów, and thus careers in Austria were normally pursued by those who did not want or could not work in their own country. Ludwik Gumplowicz (1838-1909) was one such case: a lawyer who was refused his habilitation degree with the Jagiellonian University, owing to his avowedly declared atheism and anticlericalism, and who subsequently obtained his readership (*Dozent* degree) and professorship in Graz. This illustrious state and law theoretician, sociologist, well-known attorney in criminal cases, columnist and local-government activist in Krakow, left Galicia one day, severely embittered with his native scholarly milieu. While in Austria, he had his works published in German but ran a Polish home and raised his sons – Maksymilian, a historian, and Władysław, a socialist publicist – in the Polish cultural context. Years afterwards, he and his wife Franciszka, nee Goldman, were affected by a mortal disease, and eventually resolved to commit suicide together, in 1909.

Teodor Leszetycki's position in Austria was special. This outstanding piano virtuoso, who settled as a pedagogue in Vienna in 1878, following his earlier sojourn in Petersburg, gave instruction to a group of Polish pianists who later made names for themselves across Europe – with Ignacy-Jan Paderewski, Ignacy Friedman and Henryk Melcer at the head.

Austrian-Polish relations in the areas of literature and visual arts were incomparably more intense. Close contact was contracted during the International Literary Congress in Vienna, 1881, which was attended by Polish authors from Galicia, the Russian Partition (Wacław Szymanowski, Bolesław Prus, Antoni Zaleski) and the emigration diaspora (Józef-Ignacy Kraszewski, then residing in Dresden; Władysław Mickiewicz, Adam's son, from Paris). At the turn of the century, Vienna Modernism exerted enormous influence on Polish literature and arts. 1897 saw an almost parallel emergence, in Vienna and in Krakow, of associations propagating the new artistic trends: the *Vereinigung Bildener Künstler Österreichs – Wiener Secession* and the Polish Artists' Society 'Sztuka' ['Art']. The Krakow association (to be covered in more detail later) owed much to the Austrian experience. The literary magazines *Ver Sacrum*, published by the *Wiener Secession*, and *Życie*, published in Kraków between 1897 and 1900, being the movements' organs, developed in parallel to each other. The leading artists of

Polish Modernism, such as Stanisław Przybyszewski or the Polish and German author Tadeusz Rittner, visited Vienna several times and temporarily lived there, and their plays were staged by German-language theatres.

The aggregation of Polish people in Berlin was another story. Trips to the capital of Prussia and, subsequently, Germany were made during the whole of the 19th century; their main purpose was financial, prestige-related or professional advancement. The Polish intelligentsia gathered in Berlin alongside workers and a very large group of servants, usually women. Those groups assimilated gradually; in any case, there were some 100,000 Poles dwelling in Berlin before the war broke out; there were about 300 organisations of various kinds; the Polish press was issued voluminously.

Apart from the will to earn money and improve one's living standard, Poles were attracted to Germany by the dense network of excellent universities as well as other tertiary schools. The largest groups of students, including doctoral students, from all the Polish lands peregrinated to the university of Wrocław/Breslau (the local faculty of Slavonic languages and literatures functioned for almost fifty years, run from 1860 by Wojciech Cybulski and from 1868-1907 by Władysław Nehring). Some would go to the universities in Berlin, Leipzig, Munich, Greifswald and Bonn, as well as to the polytechnic (i.e. technological – in Darmstadt), agricultural (in Halle), artistic (Munich, in particular) and musical universities. Characteristically, the University of Konigsberg, not quite distant geographically, enjoyed very moderate popularity among the Poles: the school was, in a way provincial, and overwhelmed by German nationalism.

Contact with German science subsequently paid back in a way that was hard to underestimate: the ideas of German philosophy as well as social sciences, history, cultural theory and pedagogy were much better known in Poland and their influence was deeper than is commonly thought. This contact was moreover shared by several consecutive generations and by completely different intellectual formations. Leipzig University alone was attended, within the fifty years after the January Insurrection, by the Warsaw Positivist authors Aleksander Świętochowski and Piotr Chmielowski; the sociologist Ludwik Krzywicki; Władysław Jabłonowski (1865-1956), a literary critic and national-democracy activist; the Expressionist author Tadeusz Miciński (1873-1918); Franciszek Bujak (1875-1953), a social-economic historian; and, Stefan Czarnowski (1879-1937), a sociologist and theoretician of culture. Świętochowski recollected years afterwards that he had consumed the intellectual benefits from his studies in Leipzig over his entire life.

There were centres of importance to Polish intellectual life of the late 19th/early 20th century outside the partitioner countries as well. Paris continued to be

important in this respect – for more than a hundred years by then, a sanctuary for insurgents and revolutionists, a mainstay of poets, a mecca for artists, dancers and theatrical artists. The capital of France in the fin-de-siècle period still dictated the artistic trends and patterns of behaviour for Poles, although it was still at times perceived as a source of metropolitan corruption and a menace to Polishness. Stefan Żeromski's trilogy *Walka z szatanem* ['Struggles with Satan'] is perhaps the best literary record of a Paris thus viewed – a threatening 'moloch city', an abode of demoralising amusements, amidst which it is extremely easy to deviate from the proper course, reject the matters of importance for Polish people and choose a life that is easy, unimportant and shallow. The prevalent and timeless view of Paris was that of a metropolis that was "superior over all the other foci of life" (Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Bez dogmatu* ['No dogma']). The Polish community in Paris still remained numerous and intellectually prolific, albeit not in a manner comparable to the Great Emigration.

> Paris! For almost the whole century, Paris was the rallying point for the revolutionary Polish emigration. Paris affected them with a tremendous attracting power, as a safe port offering shelter against the pursuit and vengeance of enemies, and as a *pied-à-terre*, as a preparatory area for organising new offensives in the combat for great political and social purposes.
> Stanisław Koszutski, *Walka młodzieży polskiej o wielkie ideały. Wspomnienia z czasów gimnazjalnych i uniwersyteckich (1881-1900)* ['Polish youth fighting for the great ideals. Memories from the gymnasium and university period, 1881-1900'], Warszawa 1928, p. 143.

In the Paris of the century's turn, there were over sixty Polish and Polish-immigrant community organisations of the most diverse sorts – from workers' associations and political party units (the Paris section of the PPS), through to scientific institutions. A special place was occupied in the local Polish community by a large group of Sorbonne students, who organised their own mutual-aid circles. The framework of scholarly and literary life was set by the activities of institutions that existed over dozens of years, the most important ones being the Polish Library and the Polish School in *rue* Lamandé (previously, on Boulevard de Batignolles), publishing its own periodical, *Bulletin Polonais*, dealing with the Polish community's affairs; A Scientific Station affiliated to the Krakow Academy of Learning opened in 1891 as part of the Polish Library, and was meant to be a foothold for Polish scholars in the French capital. Researchers in a number of specialist fields, historians, Slavicists, doctors, and representatives of natural and exact sciences worked in a variety of local scientific institutions over the entire period – the best known exponent being Maria Skłodowska-Curie. The artistic and literary life of the local Polish community was also sustained over the whole period.

In the 1870s and the 1880s, the main animator of these activities was Władysław Mickiewicz, the son and biographer of Adam the poet. He owned the 'Księgarnia Luxemburgska' publishing house which issued dozens of works by Polish and French authors, and was a member of numerous Polish community organisations. In the late 19th century, the émigré community's leadership was taken over by the sculptor Cyprian Godebski (1835-1909), the author of monuments, for example, in Krakow, Warsaw and Paris, the grandson and namesake of the soldier and poet from the Napoleonic era, and, in particular, Wacław Gasztowtt (1844-1929), a man of letters, the headmaster of the Batignolles school and the editor of its press organ, and an activist with emigration organisations. They consecutively chaired the Polish Literary-Artistic Circle, established in 1897; born and bred in France, identifying themselves, on an equal footing, with French and Polish culture, staying loyal to the native country of their fathers and the one of their own, they both represented this type of Polish characteristic at the century's end.

> Dear friends! You have an absolutely special mission to fulfil: you are, as it were […], a natural link between the two nations. […] Be Poles, in the first place […], but, passionately devoted to Poland, do remain full of admiration and gratefulness to France. […] Do join the ranks of those who learn at this place how to love humankind no less than their Homeland; those who claim that you cannot be a Pole if you do not love France and, likewise, one cannot be a good Frenchman if he does not commit himself to the cause of Poland – that is, the cause of law, justice, and freedom.
> Wacław Gasztowtt, address to the students of the Polish School in Paris, 1885; quoted after: Urszula Kozierowska, Stanisław Kocik, *Polska-Francja. Więzi odległe i bliskie* ['Poland-France. The remote and close ties'], Warszawa 1978, p. 123).

Similarly to a few other such associations, the Polish Literary-Artistic Circle set as the goal for itself the promotion of Polish art in France by organising exhibitions, by commemorating the dates of importance in the history of Polish culture (for example, the fiftieth anniversary of Chopin's death), and by arranging for lectures of artists arriving from the home country. These contacts intensified at the turn of the century. The worldwide importance of the new trends in arts, which evolved and triumphed in the city on the Seine at that time, added to its attractiveness. Painters, sculptors, men of letters, musicians, dancers, and men of the theatre all gathered there in order to dive into that fascinating universe of new ideas, values and fashions, and subsequently bring them along to Poland. The actresses Gabriela Zapolska and Wanda Siemaszko; musicians such as Ignacy-Jan Paderewski and the Reszke siblings: Jan, Edward and Józefina; the leading Polish impressionist painters Olga Boznańska and Władysław Ślewiński; the sculptor Stanisław Ostrowski, and dozens of other Polish artists, spent longer

or shorter periods of their lives in Paris, watching, imitating and practising the new mannerisms, sometimes impressing their own style upon it, taking part in the Paris bohemia's café life at the restaurants or clubs of the Montparnasse and Boulevard St. Michel, filled with smoke. Owing to those artists, the fin-de-siècle canons of artistic activity, fashion and behaviour penetrated into the country on the Vistula, virtually overnight.

> The Latin Quarter was swarming with the artistic bohemia. Black wide-brimmed hats or berets, black silk fancy-knots instead of ties, white dishevelled collars, named 'Słowacki-style' in our country, black velvet jackets, black pelerines – not infrequently going out of vogue, bright-coloured wool scarves tied at the neck: all that gave the district a peculiar charm and character.
> Ksawery Glinka, *Paryż mojej młodości* ['Paris in my youth years'], Beirut 1950/London 1957, p. 20.

An essential element of the new style of life and of performing the arts was artistic and literary cabaret whose prototype was the Chat Noir, established in 1881 in Montmartre. In early 1905, a group of young Polish artists in Paris (Leon Schiller* among them) set up a cabaret of their own, named 'Oberża Pieśniarska' ['The Vocalist Hostelry'] and it was inaugurated on 15th January. This initiative was a challenge thrown down against the public's traditional taste; the founding artists declared in their programme: "[…] We are opening the gates of our Hostelry wide for Artless Laughter, Daring Satire, Deep Indignation, and High-minded Rebellion. We are mercilessly expelling through our gates Sanctimonious Hypocrisy, Dull Prejudices, and Usurped Seriousness."[72] The pattern inspired Krakow's 'Zielony Balonik', which appeared a few months later, and all the cabarets that followed it in Polish lands. Characteristic of this cabaret's artistic method was a fast sequence of turns, clownish humour, references to public life incidents and individuals, and, primarily, severe, often quite ruthless, attacks on the bourgeois hypocrisy and prejudices and the pompous seriousness of the self-satisfied pecuniary and social elite.

This tradition was continued in France, in a somewhat softer form, by the 'nativity plays' of the Polish Artists' Society, founded in 1910 in Paris, which gained repute as an ambassador of young Polish culture and arts. Finally, a Polish feminist movement also developed in the French capital, through its contacts

72 From the programme of Oberża Pieśniarska, 15th January 1905; quoted after: Tadeusz Sivert, *Polacy w Paryżu. Z dziejów polskiego życia kulturalnego w Paryżu na przełomie XIX i XX wieku* ['The Poles in Paris. Aspects of the history of the Polish cultural life in Paris, late 19th/early 20th century'], Warszawa 1980, p. 160.

with Western Europe on the one hand and with Warsaw and Lwów on the other, whose leader was Maria Szeliga (née Mirecka, first and second married surnames: Czarnowska, Loevy; lived 1854-1927). This authoress of Positivist thesis novels emigrated from Poland in 1880 as she feared repressions for her secret educational activities. When in Paris, she took part in the French suffrage movement, wrote articles, in French, as 'Marie Chéliga', for *La Revue Féministe*, founded the Union Universelle des Femmes and the Théâtre Féministe (1897), the latter being a centre attracting Polish and French womens' movement activists.

The other clusters of Polish people in Western Europe: in England, Belgium and, especially, in Switzerland, were much less considerable in size and animated by a very different spirit, and so would not compare to Paris as far as their artistic achievements are concerned. After the fall of the January Insurrection and of the Commune of Paris, 1871, and – particularly at the century's end – London and a number of Swiss towns (but Paris too, eventually) provided asylum for a number of radical and socialist activists. For a number of years (1891-2 and 1893-1901), *Przedświt*, the most important press organ of the Polish socialists, was published in London. Geneva became home to Zygmunt Miłkowski, Bolesław Limanowski (who lived next, 1889-1907 in Paris), Walery Wróblewski (resident in London before then), Kazimierz Dłuski, and many others. The leading socialist journals were issued in Geneva: *Równość*, edited by K. Dłuski, Stanisław Mendelson, Szymon Dickstein et al., 1879-81; and, *Przedświt*, 1881-90 (before its editorial team moved to London).

Switzerland became an asylum for Polish national keepsakes and mementos: in Rapperswil on the Zurich Lake, a Polish National Museum was created in 1870, the initiative of Władysław Plater. The establishment's purpose was to form a collection of objects thematically related to the Polish uprisings and the Great Emigration, by taking over or acquiring private archival materials and book collections (related to Kościuszko, Mickiewicz, the January Insurrection, etc.), with a parallel publishing activity. Poles living abroad for many years, alongside young scholarship holders from Poland – Stefan Żeromski and national-democratic columnist Zygmunt Wasilewski among them – contributed to the institution's mission.

The last quarter of the 19th century witnessed a significant growth in the numbers of Polish students leaving to study abroad, who were not discouraged by the fact that, as a former Polish student in Switzerland recollected, "the trip to do your university studies was practically as much as a flight from Europe to America"[73] and implied an expense only to be tackled by well-off families. Apart from the Sorbonne, a traditional choice, or the much dearer English universities,

73 Antonina Morzkowska, *Tak było* ['And so it was'], 'Niepodległość', 1934, vol. 9, p. 213.

their Belgian peers became popular in the late years of 19th and the early 20th century, including those of Liège, Brussels (where many women would travel to), Louvain and Ghent.

A still larger group of Polish students, male and female, gathered at Swiss universities, especially those of Zurich, Geneva, Fribourg, Lausanne and Bern. As these universities opened for female students at an early stage, the number of Polish women studying there was particularly high. Teresa Ciszkiewiczowa, already mentioned in this story, was one of the first among them, and earned her physician's diploma in Bern in 1879. From the eighties onwards, most Polish female students would choose Geneva University. Poles studying in Switzerland had an opportunity to be in touch with the Polish scholars lecturing there – among them, Stanisław Kostanecki and Marceli Nencki, professors of organic chemistry and biochemistry, respectively, at Bern University; Gabriel Narutowicz, a professor of water engineering at Zurich University of Technology (ETH Zürich); or, Ignacy Mościcki, assistant lecturer with the Physics Department of Fribourg University.

However, the major experience for a large number of students in Switzerland was their coming into touch with socialist ideas and the programme of revolutionary improvement of social relations, owing to their contact with Polish socialists who had settled in the country. At the beginning, the radicalism of the Polish community in Switzerland had no clearly set worldview boundaries, similarly to the editorial team of *Głos* in Warsaw; hence, they were activists and sympathisers who afterwards joined political camps fighting against each other – like Bolesław Limanowski or Zygmunt Balicki, later on the national democracy ideologist – and could identify themselves with this trend. The differences grew severer at the century's end, while the Polish students' community in Switzerland stood for a more radical socialist programme. Student organisations often provided activists for the Polish Socialist Party and, reciprocally, disseminated its programme among the Polish students. For instance, in the academic year of 1887/8, the Society of Polish Youth in Zurich held a total of twenty-three lectures, covering subject-matters such as: *The theory of K. Marx*; *F. Engels: The origins of civilisation*; *The theory of anarchism*; *The programmes and activities of Polish socialists*; *The influence of women on social development*; *The social relations of the Jewry in Poland*; *The intelligentsia in Poland* – along with themes such as *The aspirations once the Partitions are over*; *[J. Słowacki's]* Kordian; or, *Świętochowski*. The topics of papers delivered in Geneva were very similar.[74]

74 Antoni Karbowiak, *Młodzież polska akademicka za granicą 1795-1910* ['The Polish academic youth abroad 1795-1910'], Kraków 1910, pp. 269-271.

At the same time, the Polish student community in Switzerland – mixed sex-wise, leftist-oriented, and open to the emancipation of women and Jews – tended to break, much faster than Poles at home did, the lesser and lesser useful perennial canons of behaviour, the rigid corset of convention, prejudice and fear. This concerned not only the relations between the sexes, between Poles and Jews, but also the attitude toward other nations, especially the Russians who also studied in Switzerland. The contact with them, in the learning process, on a social footing, and in illegal revolutionary actions, were much easier to establish there, compared to in the home country where any relationship with the partitioner was stigmatised as a betrayal of the national interest. (The antagonism overshadowed the relationships there as well: Antonina Morzkowska, the already-quoted memoirist, proudly emphasises that she tried her best not to contact the Russians over her entire course of studies.) The young Poles were thereby taught tolerance, openness to otherness, which was so rare during the Partition period, with the pressure of national issues usually generating attitudes closed and inimical to any dissimilarity; on the other hand, the 'Jewified Zurich' became, because of this, an object of fierce criticism from national-democratic and Catholic publicists.

The other European centres appeared much less attractive to Poles. There were some outstanding individuals dwelling outside the main Polish community aggregations that proved capable of establishing bonds between their native country and the emigration, or gather around them a group of compatriots. One such was Teofil Lenartowicz, the poet and sculptor, living from 1860 in Florence (he died there in 1893); another was Henryk Bukowski, a January Insurrection veteran, a keen expert in art and the owner of a grand antiquarian company in Stockholm, he was also a contributor to the Rapperswil Museum; or, the philosopher Wincenty Lutosławski, whose vibrant scientific career took him from Paris to Madrid, London to Kazan, Helsinki (Helsingfors, at the time) to Leipzig. Individual Polish scholars and engineers resolved to seek a career outside of Europe, particularly in South America. The late 19th century was marked by the greatest wave of exiles heading for new territories – the Ruhr valley in Germany, the United States or Brazil. That migration was however strictly economic, the migrants coming from urban and, primarily, rural areas and taking in the country of their settlement for manual labour, primarily in industries, under fast development at the time. The phenomenon was widely disputed by the columnists at home, but usually did not imply trips of intellectual elite exponents (save for the few exceptions, for example, the American episode in the biography of Helena Modrzejewska and the circle of admirers around her, including Henryk Sienkiewicz). The émigrés' spiritual leaders were, mostly, their accompanying priests. The result was that the Polish clusters in the Ruhr district or over the

Pond proved rather homogeneous culturally, and it was only in the later years of the period under discussion, right before World War One and during it, that they generated the first, thin stratum of an intelligentsia as well as a petite bourgeoisie.

2. Young Poland: between community commitment and decadence

Beginning with the middle of the 1880s – as the new ideas in literature, arts and philosophy flowed into Polish lands from the West – milieus started emerging whose style of life and thinking was opposite to the existing elites. One such milieu was formed of naturalistic writers and painters gathered around the Warsaw magazine *Wędrowiec*, edited by Artur Gruszecki (1884-8). At the same time, a remarkable fever of objection against the inherited social-political order was rampant among the Polish youth of the Russian Partition, leading to the emergence of the *Głos* weekly and to the younger generation's considerably radicalised postulates, attitudes and modes of operation. However, the most spectacular change occurred as the conviction penetrated into Poland – this time, via Vienna, and Berlin too, affecting Krakow first – that inevitable at the century's end was a decay of the former patterns of behaviours, aesthetic norms and methods of cultivating the arts, ousted now by modernisation and modernistic postulates that would impose in-depth revaluation of the current style of life and existence – from transformations in the external appearances and everyday manners through to the building of a new, improved human being.

The belief in the power of science, technological progress and big industry tottered at the century's end. The unprecedentedly long period of political and economic stability in Europe (the historian Jerzy W. Borejsza describes the nineteenth century as a 'beautiful' age), with its elaborated sense of safety, began being replaced by a fear of the daemon of modern capitalism which had gained unrestricted power over humans and was now carrying them, dazed and helpless, into a future that was beset with threats. The former scientific programme was now being replaced by modernistic postulates of individualism, rejection of intellect as a method of searching for Absolute, and of living a life untrammelled by the rigid corset of convention. This mood has earned the colloquial and not-quite-adequate name of decadentism. As part of it, interest has increased in the biological instincts governing human life, in psychology and in metaphysics. The ideas of Henri Bergson became extremely popular in Europe and in Poland, with his conviction about the fiasco of cognition based upon intellect and scientific analysis – to the benefit of intuition, which was the only means by which to comprehend reality, that is, a world that is propelled and controlled not by

scientifically measurable categories and laws but by an *élan vital* – the power that, erring, losing its routes, turning back, dodging, and finding its path again, leads humanity to a society without barriers, religions, tradeoffs, or bans. In the Polish press, the French thinker's ideas were facilitated by uncommon exponents of a variety of humanistic disciplines.

In parallel, new interest was aroused in the ideas and literature of the Romanticist era. What it meant in the Polish realities was, in particular, a growing fascination with the output of Juliusz Słowacki, which since the nineties "spread, explicitly, with an elemental force, overwhelming the young hearts, penetrating"[75]. Very similar emotions were triggered by the 'discovery' of Cyprian-Kamil Norwid's poetry, which was misunderstood by his contemporaries.

Given the power of the natural law of the ageing of individuals and societies, decadentism resorted to empty gestures and contester's poses, while also claiming the necessity to depreciate nature at the expense of culture. Art was now considered, at least in Modernism's first phase, as the only absolute value available to man, the pure cultivation of art – free of any social and/or national postulates, prospects for any practical benefits, without even looking after beauty in an academic sense of the notion – being regarded the only way to proceed.

At the same time, the epoch's essential trait was its optimistic, for all that, belief that a jubilant character, affirming the tragedy of existence would forge it into a spiritual victory. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche was the best mouthpiece of such ideas; he coined the notion 'will of might', describing a power that enables the fulfillment of the potential inherent in individuals. His work *Thus Spoke Zarahtustra* proposes the concept of Beyond-Man, or Superman (*Übermensch*), who, based upon his genetic makings, through upbringing and education, breaking the adversities, and growing aware of the 'will of might', is capable of gaining perfection equal to the divine one. This concept implied a departure from the schematic good/evil distinction, and a rehabilitation of human sexuality, lust and physical love, which smashes the pattern in a particularly emphatic fashion. Thus, the works of Nietzsche and his imitators combined the decadent slogans *l'art pour l'art* – 'art for art's sake' or *evviva l'arte* -'long live art!' with the increased prestige of strong and creative individuals, whilst catastrophism and nihilism was coupled with the belief that humankind was capable of heaving up to the ideals of the Nietzschean heroes.

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75 Józef Kallenbach, foreword to: *Cieniom Juliusza Słowackiego, Rycerza napowietrznej walki, która się o narodowość naszą toczy – uczniowie Wszechnicy Lwowskiej* ['To the shade of Juliusz Słowacki, the Knight of the aerial combat that is fought for our nationality – students of the Lwów University'], Lwów 1909, p. I.

From the end of 19th century onwards, Nietzsche's works were known in Polish lands; they were all translated into Polish by the early years of the 20th century. Their main threads and motifs: the *Übermensch* idea, the appraisal of the libido (sex drive), up to declarations such as: "what thinker still has need of the hypothesis of a God?"[76], aroused distaste and criticism, verging on hysteria, but also enthusiasm, sometimes close to idolatry. Due to worldview reasons, Nietzsche was attacked by conservative and Catholic critics; from scholarly positions, the attackers were the authors associated with *Przegląd Filozoficzny*, a philosophical review published in Warsaw from 1897, who denied the German author the name of a professional philosopher. His followers highlighted that Nietzsche's doctrine was rooted "in a longing for heroism, and hatred toward a stunted society", whereas the Overman is not a monster unbridled from any social bonds, but instead, a *Homo sapienter amans*[77]. The earliest, and most famous, Polish propagator of Nietzsche's ideas was Stanisław Przybyszewski, who in the microscale of his native context became an object of admiration, dismay and disgust very much like his German master.

A cocktail of fresh and electrifying ideas brought about in the latter half of the nineties a real eruption of a new epoch in the history of Polish culture. And this occurred, characteristically enough, in Krakow – a rather small town then (with a population of ca. 50,000), provincial and conservative, tethered to conventionalities guarded by numerous groups of the Catholic clergy and the aristocracy. Krakow stimulated the activity of its dwellers through incessant patriotic and jubilee celebrations, which – held since the 1870s, initially contrary to the intents of the *Stańczyk*s-circle authorities – ossified with time into stereotypical clichés deprived of deep emotions. Yet, the city was home to a rather remarkable number of artists and men of letters; there was the eminent student colony, reinforced since the mid-1890s by groups of students expelled from Warsaw University for having joined an anniversary demonstration in honour of Jan Kiliński (1894) and other forms of protestation, as well as by groups of female students for whom the gates of the Jagiellonian University were opened little by little.

> New shoots began sprouting out of those walls, as if by a cast spelled. The life slipped out of the salons and sacristies into the streets; rustles were raised in the coffee-houses. The youth, whom you could not sense ever before in Krakow, swarmed out in their cloaks

76 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, transl. by R.J. Hollingdale, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1986.

77 Ignacy Matuszewski, *Nietzsche 1844-1900*, 'Tygodnik Ilustrowany', 1900, no. 36; Jerzy Kurnatowski, *Nietzsche. Studia i tłumaczenia* ['Nietzsche. Studies and translations'],'Przegląd Filozoficzny', 1903, no. 3.

and pelerines. On the left bank of the Vistula, the bohemia – a new phenomenon to Krakow – bloomed. By no means, a single one! Krakow could almost simultaneously watch a painters' bohemia, Pawlikowski's bohemia, Zapolska's bohemia, Przybyszewski's bohemia, the bohemia of Bronowice; well, one could say, Lutosławski's and Daszyński's bohemia too, not to say of the student bohemia, enhanced by the youth from behind the cordon, seeking shelter there over and over, and a phalange of young girls admitted for the first time to university studies.

Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, *Prawy brzeg Wisły* ['The Vistula's right bank'], 1931; quoted after: idem, *Znaszli ten kraj…? Cyganeria krakowska* ['Dost thou know this country…? The Krakow bohemia'], Wrocław 2004, p. 10.

The most important manifestation of the said 'eruption' was the establishment of the 'Sztuka' association. Its activities were kicked off by an 'isolated exhibition of paintings and sculptures' held in May 1897 at the Sukiennice (Cloth Hall), which, while dissociating from 'the average standard' of exhibitions held by the Society of the Friends of Fine Arts, referred to the Salons of the Rejected and the Independent of Paris. The ranks of 'Sztuka' were joined by, virtually, all the outstanding Polish artists of the early part of the 20th century, and their works were displayed in all major Polish towns as well as outside Poland.

The literary-artistic weekly (subsequently, bi-weekly) *Życie*, published in Krakow in 1897 to 1900, maintained close relations with the 'Sztuka' milieu. The editor was, initially, Ludwik Szczepański, the poet and publicist, and an admirer of Viennese Modernism; the artistic directors were Leon Wyczółkowski and Stanisław Wyspiański. The invitation of Stanisław Przybyszewski to join the editorial board turned out to be the decision that gave the magazine its final shape. He had proved himself to be an author of several long poems and literary-critical essays written in German, brightened by the aura of a friend of the greatest Modernist artists, August Strindberg and Edward Munch among them. A savour of sensation was added by his marriage to Dagny Juel, a Norwegian pianist and writer, considered before then to be a friend of Strindberg's. In October 1898, Przybyszewski arrived in Krakow and was enthusiastically welcomed there and took charge of editing *Życie*. (In his hammy, very rarely straightforward recollections – possibly credible in this particular respect, though – he mentions that his Krakow votaries would say to him, "I should be a happy man if I were the calf whose skin was used to get your shoes dressed"[78].) The open house kept by him and his wife Dagny turned into the meeting point of the Krakow bohemia. That moment may be considered one of the symbolic origins of Young Poland, albeit

78 Stanisław Przybyszewski, *Moi współcześni* ['My contemporaries'], Warszawa 1959, p. 300.

the movement's name was drawn from a cycle of programme articles, entitled *Młoda Polska* and published in *Życie* by Artur Górski in 1898.

> …Mr. and Mrs. Przybyszewski encroached on the *Życie* editorial office, subdued it, and commenced their activity of seducing the human souls: Mr. Przybyszewski – the minds; Dagna [i.e. Dagny] – the minds and the bodies. […] They soon became an idol of the young Krakow, which they transformed in the image and likeness of themselves. […] At the coffee-house sittings, or, in any case, during the coffee-inflamed sessions, Przybyszewski moulded the young souls. He was like a prophet amongst his pupils, who many a time endeavoured to imitate their master, be it in their appearance. […] The rumour was multiplying Przybyszewski's pranks and transformed him into some demonic potency, seducing young people and enkindling them, abusing the credulity of women. Mephistopheles, Don Juan, Faustus, ah! Who else wouldn't have been identified with Mr. Przybyszewski?
>
> Ludwik Krzywicki, *Wspomnienia*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1958, pp. 443-445.

Probably the most important move Przybyszewski made as member of the *Życie* editorial team was his famous literary manifesto titled *Confiteor*, published in 1899, formulating the 'art for art's sake' slogan. Most importantly, however, its author managed to gather around himself (be it for a short time) the most outstanding authors and artists of the time, and to efficiently transplant onto the Polish soil West-European cogitations and achievements. Lastly, his lifestyle, appalling as it was to the Krakow, and the whole Poland, of the time – the scandals, divorces and love affairs, going one after the other – was the reason why his followers as well as his opponents considered Przybyszewski an ideal incarnation of the decadent slogans.

Any fashion tends to grow mouldy quite soon. "Everything […] was now a *fin-de-siècle* staff!", Gabriela Zapolska derided. "Poesies and servants, hair combing, hypocrisy, falsehood, bigotries, perfumes, thinning mania, flirtations (a trivial variety of coquetry), dogs, hysterical attacks, announcements of the most complete lack of envy, cool-offs of heart, disappearance of the senses – in a word, all the moral and material symptoms were roughly classified as, yes, a *fin-de-siècle*."[79] This artist was one of the first to yield to the strength of the novel patterns – in her attire and in her private life. Likewise, the *fin-de-siècle* (or decadence) style impressed a stigma upon the other milieus of the Krakow bohemia: the circles that gathered around Tadeusz Pawlikowski, the director of the 'Miejski' Theatre (called "the spinal column of innovation in the theatrical art of

79 Gabriela Zapolska, *Fin-de-siècle'istka* ['A female fin-de-siècle-ist], quoted after: Józef Rurawski, *Gabriela Zapolska*, Warszawa 1987, p. 159.

the time"[80]); around Lucjan Rydel and Włodzimierz Tetmajer in Bronowice near Krakow. Young activists of the Polish Social-Democratic Party of Galicia and Cieszyn Silesia [PPSD], led by Ignacy Daszyński, and the editors of *Naprzód*, its Krakow-based organ, also yielded to this style, to an extent.

Created in Krakow at the turn of the 20th century, the type of artistic bohemian – young man living an untrammelled life, wearing a black hat, a cloak and the everlasting white scarf[81] – and of ethereal, oversensitive, poetic 'female fin-de-siècle-ist', would spread over the entire country and shape the image of the artistic avant-garde before 1914, and even in independent Poland. The novelties imported from Paris were not the only ones to step into the dressing rooms and salons. The turn of the century also saw the triumphant fashion for a familiar folksiness, things mountaineer in the first place. As the popularity of Zakopane was growing, the motifs of local art, promoted and processed by Stanisław Witkiewicz, were elevated to the so-called sublime art: from architecture and painting, through to furniture design, applied arts, and clothing.

At the same time, male fashion also drew from Sarmatian motifs, whilst female vogue sought inspiration in the forms and colours of nature, whilst no less abundantly drawing upon visual arts and literature. The excellent examples of such interrelations between nature and culture, art and life, were the costumes shown at the Young Art Ball held by Warsaw's Fine Arts School on 29th February 1908 at the Philharmonic building (immortalised in Kazimierz Stabrowski's paintings *Paw* ['Peacock'], *Melodia fal* ['A melody of the waves'] or *Królewna magicznego kryształu* ['The Magic Crystal Princess']), as well as Ferdynand Ruszczyc's costume designs for the 'Polski' Theatre in Wilno in 1909-11. The most excellent and broadest known instance was the famous Wyspiański play *Wesele*, which bacame crystallised in its author's imagination as he watched the fabulously colourful wedding party of his friend Lucjan Rydel, leaning against an embrasure in the Bronowice manor on the night of 20th November 1900. This is not to say that Young Poland trends were indiscriminately followed by everyone, everywhere. The posture of a complete rejection of the period's convention was displayed by the 'gloomy and wise' poetess and writer Maria Komornicka, the wife of the poet Jan Lemański: she eventually rejected female attire, had her hair

80 Adam Grzymała-Siedlecki, *Niepospolici ludzie w dniu swoim powszednim* ['Some uncommon people in their daily lives'], Kraków 1961, p. 183.

81 For more on the interdependencies between the fashion and the art of the Young Poland period, cf.: Anna Sieradzka, *Nie tylko peleryna: moda okresu Młodej Polski w życiu i sztuce* ['Cloaks and not only. The fashion of the Young Poland period in the everyday life and in the arts'], Warszawa 2003.

cut short and – now as 'Piotr Odmieniec Własť ('Peter Changeling Wlast') – completely denied her womanliness.

The 'Zielony Balonik' cabaret, inaugurated 7th November 1905 at the 'Jana Michalika' coffeehouse, is correctly considered the climax of the development of the Krakow avant-garde before 1914. The project was clearly inspired by the Paris stages, with the 'Oberża Pieśniarska' at the forefront; the cabaret bug that bit the Krakow milieu had been transmitted by the playwright Jan-August Kisielewski. The form and the content of the inaugural speech he delivered followed the Paris archetype; yet, Kisielewski, an author of stage plays describing the estrangement of artists in the philistine, narrow-minded Krakow community, considerably strengthened the invectives he cast at his listeners, overlooking that the soirée's public only consisted of alienated artists, very much like him.

> Pleasant Ladies! Likeable Gentlemen! […] Your simian malice, your dwarfish impertinence, vulgar sentimentalism, competitively tobacconistic aestheticism, your unpleasantly viscous brusqueness, your feckless mesquinery, particular stupidity, parochial pretences and petty aspirations are not amusing, nor displeasing: they're just boring, boring… […] I do love the abyss of your idiotism; I do adore the effronteries of your oafishness! O! Dear mine, how disgusting you are to me!
> Jan-August Kisielewski, speech at the 'Zielony Balonik' opening ceremony (quoted after: Bolesław Faron, *Jama Michalikowa. Przewodnik literacki* [*The* 'Jama Michalikowa'. A literary guide'], Kraków 1997, p. 83).

'Zielony Balonik's premiere performance ended up in a scandal. Kisielewski reviled his listeners, pounced at Jan Stanisławski, the 'ataman' of Polish painting, and was led out of the room; it soon after occurred that he had had a case of mental illness, and suffered from it till his death in 1918. Improvised sketches, choral toasts and drinking about made up the remainder of that soirée. The cabaret did not go into decline all the same, although it was threatened by the dislike of the 'philistines' it attacked head on, and was undermined by the reappearing doubts of whether it befitting to indulge in such carefree forms of entertainment at a time when there was a revolution going on behind the cordon. Andrzej Pronaszko, later on a leading Formist, who had arrived in Krakow from the riot-pervaded Ukraine to do his studies there, thus expressed his astonishment: "I could not understand how one could be making merry while there was blood being spilled close by."[82]

82 Quoted after: Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, *Znaszli ten kraj…? Cyganeria krakowska* ['Dost thou know this country…? The Krakow bohemia']„ Wrocław 2004, p. LII.

However, 'Zielony Balonik' soon proved that it was more than entertainment, whilst never quitting amusing its audiences. With time, the cabaret programmewas transformed into a satirical puppet theatre for which texts were written by, for example, Tadeusz 'Boy' Żeleński, who aptly and undisputedly humorously stigmatised the deficiencies and foibles of Krakow locals in particular, and Polish people in general. The lyricists were supported by painters and caricaturists who made invitations to the performances as well as bantering frescos on the 'Jama Michalikowa' walls. 'Zielony Balonik' ceased to exist in 1912. The cabaret and Mr. 'Boy', his number-one author, formed, as one Krakow journalist and literary life organiser put it, "a spiritual synthesis of Krakow. Ventilation of a stuffy ambience. A laughter-trigger. A discharge of vitalities, hampered by convention, tradition, backwardness. A concentration of talents and intelligences in an amount 'sufficient to cover the whole country'. A hotbed of brilliant individualities. […] 'Zielony Balonik' was a subconscious intuition that the time had been ripe for taking off the national mourning and for shaking off the ballasts the bondage had superimposed on us. 1905, the date 'Balonik' appeared, was the year of a revolution."[83]

'Zielony Balonik' commenced the 'cabarethiasis' pandemic, spreading across Poland. On the New Year's night of 1908/9, at the former Stępek's restaurant on Wierzbowa Street in Warsaw, a cabaret named 'Momus' opened, initiated by Arnold Szyfman – later, the founder and director of the 'Polski' Theatre – and starring Leon Schiller, who had appeared on stage in Paris before then. In 1911, Lwów saw the appearance of the 'Ul' ['Beehive'] cabaret, which was however wound up a few months later; 'Wesoła Jama', its successor, fell in 1912. Two years before, an ephemeral cabaret 'Bi-Ba-Bo' had operated in Łódź. During the war, new cabaret stages appeared, in Warsaw and Lublin. Satirical nativity-play-style spectacles, referring to 'Zielony Balonik', were produced in Poznań as well as in Lwów, Tarnów and elsewhere in Galicia; normally, just a few performances were shown in each case.

Following Krakow, Warsaw could enjoy its own 'bohemia' and an artistic-literary magazine, close in its formula and quality to *Życie*. *Chimera*, edited by Zenon Przesmycki ('Miriam') was issued from 1901 to 1907, claiming the programme of an art exceeding the instructions of common morality, and free of any national or social tendencies; a cult of great creative individualities; intuition perceived as the central driver of mankind, and, indeterminableness of the conflict between

83 Zygmunt Leśnodorski, *Wśród ludzi mojego miasta. Wspomnienia i zapiski* ['Among the people of my town. Memories and records'], Kraków 1968, p. 18.

artist and society. The magazine was distinct with its extremely meticulous artwork. *Chimera* published the works of the leading Polish Modernist authors. What goes to the credit of *Chimera* – and, indeed, of Miriam himself – is that it reinstated among the Polish readers the output of Cyprian-Kamil Norwid, almost completely forgotten by then. Przesmycki devoted the whole eight volume of his magazine to Norwid, and initiated an edition of the poet's complete works.

As opposed to its Krakow counterpart, the Warsaw bohemia of the beginning of the 20th century had a single undisputable coryphaeus, an individuality that effortlessly fulfilled the role of a domestic deity, never-erring master, jester and mascot, not competing in any field against Przybyszewski, Wyspiański, Rydel, Zapolska, or any other artist aspiring for the leadership of the Krakow avant-garde. The man was Franc (*vel* France – that is, Franciszek) Fiszer (1860-1937), of a landowning family residing near Ostrołęka. Having squandered the property he had inherited, he became a perennial resident of Warsaw cafés, and at their frequenters'. His fame was that of a homebred philosopher, a well-known gourmet (and bibber) of a Gargantuic figure, a poet who never wrote poetry, a thinker who never codified his ideas, an author of the aptest bon-mots and the brightest-sparkling paradoxes which the whole of the Warsaw community repeated after him. In his custodial shade – usually, at a table in the 'Udziałowa' restaurant at the intersection of Nowy-Świat Street and Jerozolimskie Avenue (and, at the 'Ziemiańska' after the war), poets, journalists, and writers aggregated. Through their recollections, the figure of Fiszer – a man with virtually no biography, no ambitions, no achievements, no legacy, and no education – is formatted into a continually-intriguing 'classic of the absurd'.

> [Franc Fiszer about himself in 1905-7:] I also took part in the independence movement, albeit more in a passive than in an active way. I was once invited to my acquaintances for a supper. Once I arrived there, it turned out that a moment before then, the police had taken all of them there to a circuit-station [i.e. police station]. I was thus left with the twenty-four pound-steaks I then had to eat.
> *Na rogu świata i nieskończoności. Wspomnienia o Franciszku Fiszerze* ['At the intersection of the world and infinity. Memories on Franciszek Fiszer'], ed. R. Loth, Warszawa 1985, p. 289.

The postulated independence of art from any and all social and national entanglements, as formulated in *Życie* and *Chimera*, aroused voices of criticism from a variety of standpoints. Charges were expressed by conservative defenders of literature and art comprehended in traditional, academic terms (Stanisław Tarnowski was among them); also, by representatives of the elder generation of the Warsaw intelligentsia, incessantly convinced that creative artists ought to feel responsible for the society they had happened to be active within (for example,

Wacław Nałkowski); columnists of the younger and the youngest generation, actively involved in the current public life (primarily, Stanisław Brzozowski, who in his famed *Legenda Młodej Polski* ['The legend of Young Poland'] of 1909 charged Young-Poland artists, in a stupendously turbid style, with muddle-headedness, artificial draping of a world that had already been lacerated by averageness and nonsense, a fatalistic fondness of fatalism and luridness, 'dismantling the soul' of a nation that had nonetheless awoken defenceless). Young-Poland mannerisms were also sneered at by intellectuals affiliated with the leftist parties, for whom the exuberant individualism of Modernism appeared incompatible with the dominant role of the masses in human history.

> On grabbing hold of a pen, [the Young-Poland authors] are always willing to learn what is it that they think, that they are actually up to. The expression is, in this case, supposed to give shape to the potential of the mysterious world that is asleep in their heads. The mysterious world is usually very uninteresting: a poet, being nothing, would like to be everything; his idea about it is very provincial, his famishing intellect falls under the pressure of elemental associations so sparse that no decent chaos could even be generated out of them. […] And, whole dozens, shocks of pieces are born, one after the other, written by people who are only able to say that their life is pointless, or, perhaps, it could have some significance if something happened of which nothing in specific could be said, for the world is overly mysterious; and, the kind-hearted critics start writing about a pallid face of the thinker, staring at the blood-red eyes of a sphinx.
> Stanisław Brzozowski, *Legenda Młodej Polski. Studia o strukturze duszy kulturalnej* ['The legend of the Young Poland. Studies in the structure of cultural soul'], ed. 2, Lwów 1910, pp. 471-472.

The 'art for art's sake' slogans began losing their gravity as time went on. Young Poland's artists increasingly willingly referred to the Nietzschean vision of a victorious, emancipated hero that grows up amidst his milieu and proves capable of overcoming its limitations; one that transcends his fellow human beings but shares all their sufferings too. Polish poets and writers found this image particularly close, through its obvious analogies with the current status of their homeland and through references to the concepts of great Romanticists. Stanisław Wyspiański had the foremost position among those Young-Poland artists.

Son of a Krakow sculptor, Wyspiański studied with Jan Matejko, and dabbled with visual arts till the end of his days: his stained-glass windows at the Franciscan Church in Krakow, his watercolour views of the Commons park, or of the Kościuszko Mound, are no less distinct a testimony of Young Poland than his dramatic works. It is the latter, though, that became his actual vocation, with time. As a dramatist, Wyspiański explored motifs drawn from the Polish Middle Ages and the nineteenth century as well as his contemporary topics (for example,

Wesele of 1901). His revolutionary dramaturgic concepts, intuitive familiarity with the theatrical language, extraordinary sensitivity to the crucial issues of the Polish past and present caused that Wyspiański's plays made one feel and think, outraged, knocked out from a circle of easy complacency, enchanted, diverted and overawed all at once. The great heroes – the protagonists – embarked on great deeds but were defeated in the clash against narrow-mindedness. This author, the only one among his contemporary artists, except S. Żeromski, that could cope with the inheritance of Polish history and its influence on society's spiritual condition; like the great Romanticists, he wanted to act as 'the conscience' and a spiritual leader of the entire nation. However, since he took up the greatest topics – sanctity and sin, wisdom and enthusiasm, greatness and shallowness, and their delusive appearances, and, finally, "Poland's spasmodic spoiling for independence", all that with the greatest solemnity, he remained outside the Young Poland mainstream.

The characters created by Jerzy Żuławski, Tadeusz Miciński, Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer and, in particular, Leopold Staff were modelled according to an equally heroic pattern, albeit on a significantly smaller scale with regards to these authors' talents and aspirations. Staff's poetic cycles *Sny o potędze* ['Dreams of power'] and *W cieniu miecza* ['In the shadow of the sword'] came as a response to the image of decadence, toughened toward the end of the 19th century, wailing amidst the dark of the night with his own inability to act, in whatever way. "Anything that's tremulous, servile, humble inside me", Staff wrote in his poem with a very telling title *Poczucie pełni* ['Sense of fulfilment'], "crushed have I with a brutal, fierce fist of a giant". Such a hero ideally harmonised with the demand posed to Poles by the last years of peace – the period when an increasing conflict between the partitioning powers was growing increasingly visible; the time when the whole of Europe was becoming materially and psychologically prepared for the imminent struggle. Those very last moments preceding the assault in Sarajevo saw virtually no exception in the consonant choir of Polish first and second-rank poets, columnists from periodicals of the most varied standards and sorts, painters and authors of one-penny picture-postcards or kitschy shop windows, careful researchers of the past and zealous but emotion-driven amateurs. The word 'hero' ceased, at last, to be equivalent, in the Polish context, of 'ascetic' or 'martyr'; it would set itself free of the associations like 'renouncement', 'stigmas', 'fetters', 'weep' and 'blood'. At the dawn of the new century, Poland was apparently in

need of jubilant heroes, "creative minds and creative hands".[84] This mantra was repeated almost by all; it may be doubted whether the experiences of the nineteenth-century spurts for independence allowed that prayer to be converted into genuine faith.

3. The First World War

In the last years before the outbreak of the Great War, Europe was finally divided between the Triple Alliance (Germany-Austro-Hungary-Italy) and the Triple Entente (France-Great Britain-Russia), an arrangement that decided the outbreak and the course taken by the world conflict. At the same time, in Polish society – and, above all, in the circles of its intelligentsia – the strivings for its autonomy or even future independence were crystallising into so-called orientations that sought a foothold and support either in one or another partitioning power.

Following the suppressed Revolution of 1905-7 and the withdrawal by the authorities of some of the concessions made to Poles in the course of it (for example, the Polish Educational Society was dissolved in 1907; Polish was excluded as a language of local municipal governments), things clearly calmed down in the Russian Partition. National Democracy gained the position of the most powerful political party, running in a series of elections for the Petersburg Duma with success. Its leader, Roman Dmowski, published in 1908 his famous book *Niemcy, Rosja i kwestia polska* ['Germany, Russia and the Polish question'], regarding Germany as the main enemy of Poles, and exhorting that the Polish raison d'état be associated with the Romanov empire. He consistently pursued this political line, going as far as involving his faction in the neo-Slavism movement – the action undertaken by Petersburg in order to integrate Slavic nations under Russian imperial patronage. This pro-Russian stance of the National Democrats was not undermined by protests of some of the party's activists (Aleksander Zawadzki – 'Father Prokop' left its ranks, along with the others, whilst Zygmunt Miłkowski, the aged patron of the National League, condemned Dmowski's policy in an open letter), nor even by the Government's actions unfavourable to Poles, with the result that Dmowski renounced his Duma seat.

The most difficult test for the pro-Russian orientation was the detachment of the Chełm Land – an area which was considered to be purely Russian and, as such, separated from the Kingdom of Poland. In 1912, a new Chełm *Guberniya*

84 Karol Irzykowski, *Czyn i słowo* ['By action and by word. A sceptic's glosses'], Lwów 1913, pp. 26-27.

was formed of the eleven borderline counties of the Lublin and Siedlce *Guberniyas*, and incorporated in the Governorate-General of Kiev. A host of intellectuals (Władysław Reymont among them) protested against this; but even this affair did not entail a more lasting change in the pro-Russian attitude.

In this same year of 1912, the Kingdom dwellers' emotions were fired up during the election to the subsequent, now fourth, Duma. The defeat of national-democrat candidates in Warsaw (Dmowski himself) and Łódź, caused to a considerable extent by Jewish voters, triggered an unprecedented anti-Semitic campaign, which finally spoiled the hope for any common front of Poles and Jews against the Russian partitioner, which had still been cherished by the less and less numerous Polish and Jewish advocates of co-operation. The national democrats' fierce anti-Semitic attacks in 1912 finally woke up the Polish philo-Semites and the Jewish philo-Poles from this long dream, dating back to the 1860s. Both parties understood then that the national aspirations of Jews and Poles had no chance to come true within a shared geographic area.

In Galicia, contrary to the Kingdom, a camp was gaining shape whose desire was to connect the future of Poland with Austro-Hungary and its German ally. Apart from Galician politicians, this faction was co-created by and a large group of PPS-Revolutionary Fraction activists, led by Józef Piłsudski, who sought refuge behind the Austrian border after the revolution fell. As the international political situation deteriorated, the camp in question was gearing up for war. During the Bosnian crisis of 1908, a Union of Active Struggle was set up on the initiative of Piłsudski, which set as a goal for itself the preparation of an anti-Russian uprising. With the consent of the authorities, 'Strzelec' ['Rifleman'] and Riflemen's Association paramilitary troops started being formed in Krakow and Lwów, respectively; then, a variety of political parties joined the initiative and so, by 1914, these troops numbered above 10,000 members, many of whom represented the Galician intelligentsia. During the Balkan crisis of 1912, a contribution fund was set up in Zakopane by representatives of independence organisations from Galicia and the Kingdom in order to raise funds for the warfare preparations. Soon after, an ad-hoc Commission of Confederated Independence Parties was established, involving socialist and peasants' parties along with the national-democratic secessionists from both Partition areas. The independence camp, traditionally relying on the intelligentsia, placed a bet on Austria-Hungary, in the face of war. Its outbreak made it evident, however, that the sympathies among Poles were not distributed along the lines of their political/social splits, but, rather than that, were conditional upon the partition frontiers that had been there for over a hundred years.

The first days and weeks of the war saw common enthusiasm, with Poles professing their loyalty aloud with respect to their ruling thrones. These sentiments were reinforced by the partitioner states' manifestos to the Polish people, seeking their support in exchange for certain promises. In early August 1914, the German General Staff issued a proclamation 'to the Poles', promising them liberty and independence, reminding them of the "groans of *Sibir*, the bloodletting in Praga [in 1794], and the tormenting of the Uniates". On 14th August, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolayevich, commander-in-chief of the Russian army, announced that Poland would be reborn, "free as regards its religion, language, and self-government" under the sceptre of the Russian emperor, expressing a hope that "the sword that once struck the enemy on the Grunwald battlefield has not corroded. Also the Austrian command addressed the Polish people, and so did Józef Piłsudski, who summoned the Poles of the Russian Partition to struggle against Russia, on 6th August. This war of proclamations was joined by the proprietor of the Zbaraż (Zbarazh) estate in East Galicia, who published in the press an open letter to Francis Joseph I, requesting that the Emperor deign to drive the Russians away from all Polish lands, and to announce himself King of Poland.

> Warsaw exhibits now an ineffable picture of itself. Everybody is imbued with comfort and belief, in spite of the distressing news coming from the West. The great proclamation [of Grand Prince Nikolai Nikolayevich] to the Poles electrified everyone with its announced flaring daybreak. It shone forth as a dawn in itself – so beaming, breathed out from the depths of the soul, broad like a sword's gesture and hot like a friend's kiss. On reading it, the people are crying, and they can feel what their forefathers must have felt when Bonaparte, the God of war, moved his detachments closer toward the heart of Poland and Lithuania, beating with expectation. […] This city is having its head spin. The magnitude of these promises has intoxicated us like champagne.
> Cezary Jellenta, *Wielki zmierzch. Pamiętnik* ['The great dusk. Memoirs'], Warszawa 1985, p. 27.

The intelligentsia and, all the less, the entire society of the Russian Partition were by no means willing to make anti-Russian pronouncements or acts. This stance proved decisive to the failure of the raid of the first 'Cadre Company' formed by Józef Piłsudski of shooting troops, which marched into the Kingdom on 6th August, summoning the local people to rise up: silence, indifference and reluctance came as the reply.

1914 saw Polish recruits and volunteers stand up against each other within the enemies' armies which coupled the regular military units with purely Polish troops. The Polish Legions created by Józef Piłsudski formed the largest of these formations, dominated by members of the intelligentsia: 53 per cent of

its volunteer staff was intellectuals coming from Galicia or refugees from the Russian Partition; they saw in these Legions "a symbol of the idea of action, a call for a free Poland".[85] In the Kingdom, formation started of a volunteer-staff-based 'Puławski' Legion (so-called after Puławy, where the troops were billeted) which was to fight alongside the Russian Army. The idea to form Polish troops was conceived also in France, in August 1914. The first recruiting office became the editorial office of *Polonia* magazine, and the first military camp was set up in Bayonne. Members of the intelligentsia prevailed among those soldiers again, including long-ago-settled émigrés as well as those who encountered the war while temporarily in France. The unit received its own national banner, which was designed by two of the several hundred volunteers: the sculptor Xawery Dunikowski and the painter Jan Żyznowski. Władysław Szujski, nephew of the Krakow historian Józef Szujski, was made the Bayonnemen's first standard-bearer.

The tragedy of the Poles, who had to fight against one another, wearingdifferent uniforms and bearing different standards, was best expressed through the then-very-popular poems of Edward Słoński. Once a merry friend of Franc Fiszer's, Słoński turned at some point into a eulogist of Polish heroism. His verse, commenting on the war events occurring, and referring to the last century's irredentism, expressed the never-ending hope that "The one that has not yet perished" – Poland – shall spring up out of blood".

Rozdzielił nas, mój bracie,	Adversity, my brother,
zły los i trzyma straż –	has split us, and keeps guard -
w dwóch wrogich sobie szańcach	and now, from hostile bulwarks,
patrzymy śmierci w twarz.	with death we're wrestling hard.
W okopach pełnych jęku,	In trenches full of fear
wsłuchani w armat huk,	we hear the canons blare;
stoimy na wprost siebie –	we're facing now each other -
ja – wróg twój, ty – mój wróg!	each other's foes, in flare!

Edward Słoński, *Wybór wierszy* ['Selected poems'], ed. M. Piechal, Warszawa 1979, p. 133 (first printed in: 'Tygodnik Ilustrowany', September 1914.)

The hope that a Europe-wide conflict would bring Poland freedom was not the predominant sentiment in the first months of the war. It seems that there were two types of feelings that the war aroused in most educated Poles. Enthusiasm

85 Jan Skotnicki, *Przy sztalugach i przy biurku* ['At the easel and at the desk'], Warszawa 1957, p. 144. The author, painter and graphic artist, born 1876, signed in the Legions by himself, considering this to be 'the order of the moment'.

and a sense of loyalty for their own monarch and their own army, and a deep, though short-lived, enchantment with the unity of Polish society within the province, coexisting with an obvious fear that an international conflict would drag all the nations into its cogwheels, tear the thin film of civilisation off the people, and turn them into bloodthirsty savages. Cezary Jellenta, the already-quoted outstanding literary critic of the Young Poland period, kept a detailed diary in the first year of the war, where he remarked, for instance: "How come? Is it really true that Europe has been cut through with rivers of blood? Is it true, then, that armies of millions are struggling against one another? Is it really possible that men, accustomed to communing with liberty, could all of a sudden find themselves separated from it with impenetrable forests of bayonets? […] The civilisation collapsed; into thin air did it vanish". A few pages later, he gives voice to an ardent zeal, in a truly Young-Poland stylistic manner: "O blessed war, you that resurrects the enthusiasms and elations from the dead, that purifies the souls from the mud of egoism and hatred! O borough of the Siren [i.e. Warsaw; actually, the city's coat-of-arms features a *syrenka* – 'little mermaid'], your soul, tragic and martyr's, has spewed forth from the velvet burden of tomfoolery and straightens up in order to feel and to think anew – as it formerly did."[*ref./footnote?] Even if such sentiments were accompanied by a hope to regain independence, it would be offered, for the long months and years, no feed more suitable than a reminiscence of the Mickiewicz apostrophe: "We request you, Lord, for a universal war for freedom of the peoples".

As the struggle progressed and as the destruction and casualties expanded, the enthusiasm weakened – and finally faded out completely. The surviving accounts of the soldiers of Piłsudski's Legions – that most ideological formation, bred upon 1863 tradition – the bangs of grenades, blood spilled all around, heaps of corpses, irresistible tiredness and insomnia oust the initial patriotic passion. The part of population not directly affected by the war was doomed to incessantly live in its shadow – receiving news on the enemy's destructions and excesses and, especially, watching the convoys of the wounded. Transports of the war's barely-alive, suffering and crippled victims began flowing, a mere dozen-or-so days after the fighting started, into Lwów ("The people became disturbed. Transports of the injured, bigger and bigger, were coming over to the town, with increasing frequency. The hospitals, and schools turned into hospitals, got filled to the brim"); Krakow ("There was not a single day in Krakow without a repercussion from the battlefield"); Warsaw ("The injured are coming near on fire-brigade box-cars, old tramway wagons drawn by horses, and, in cars. The whole of Krakowskie [Przedmieście] and Nowy-Świat Streets are surrounded by dense

lanes of people: 'The wounded are coming!'"[86]); and to all the other localities at the war's background. And, these transports aroused disquiet and fear, and undermined trust.

This was complemented by material losses, particularly bitter in Galicia where heavy fighting went on for a number of months in 1914 and 1915, with the Russians temporarily capturing its large areas, Lwów and Przemyśl included. In the Kingdom, the German offensive of 1915 likewise entailed death and destruction, of which the severest was the burning of Kalisz, once the town was deserted by Russian troops and left defenceless. And it was in the Kingdom too, during the battle of Bolimów (31st January 1915), that toxic gases were used by the Germans on the Eastern Front for the first time: first, xylite bromide was applied and thereafter, attacks with the use of chlorine were repeated thrice. Lastly, a smashing blow to the Kingdom's economy was the evacuation by the Russians of offices and industrial establishments, together with their staff, deep inside Russia. Likewise evacuated were all the inhabitants of the country who did not hold Russian citizenship (an estimated million people, some of whom voluntarily joined those evacuated). As a result, the following years of the German occupation was a period of unemployment, famine, and high mortality rates (primarily among children). The Central Welfare Council (*Rada Główna Opiekuńcza*), established 1st January 1916 in Warsaw, arranged for the necessary aid to be given to the people. A variety of charity actions, fundraising actions and lotteries for the needy were spontaneously joined by numerous representatives of the intelligentsia elites, with many women among them.

The forcing out of the Russians from the Kingdom created a completely new political situation. Two occupation zones were formed in the seized territory: the German zone, with the capital in Warsaw, and the Austrian one, with the capital being Lublin. The German language was made obligatory for the administration and courts, but a local self-government system was introduced, and the education system was Polonised at all the levels – including the Warsaw *Politechnika* (University of Technology) and the University of Warsaw. "Reborn out of the long-ago-died-out ashes"[87], the Polish university inaugurated its activity on

86 The quotes are drawn, respectively, from: Bogusław Longchamps de Berier, *Ochrzczony na szablach powstańczych… Wspomnienia (1884-1918)* ['Baptised on the insurgent sabres… Memoirs, 1884-1914'], Wrocław 1983, p. 336; Władysław Leopold Jaworski, *Diariusz 1914-1918* ['Diary, 1914-18'], Warszawa 1997, p. 13; Cezary Jellenta, *Wielki zmierzch* ['The great dusk'], p. 28.

87 Kazimierz Konarski, *Dalekie a bliskie. Wspomnienia szczęśliwego człowieka* ['The distant and the close. Reminiscences of a happy man'], Wrocław 1965, p. 192.

15th November 1915 under the management of Rector Józef Brudziński, a physician, with a new, Polish professor staff.

The German occupation, though quite severe, still gave the Poles much bigger freedom to manifest their patriotic feelings. The Kingdom people were for the first time given an opportunity to demonstrate them in an overt and peaceful way. As a result, beginning with 1915, the press saw a real explosion of topics in Polish history and Polish-Russian relations, banned before then by Russian censorship. Celebrations of historical anniversaries were now held on an enormous scale and in grand settings; they continually took place in Krakow, Lwów and other Galician towns as well. The first such opportunity was 3rd May 1916 – the Third-of-May Constitution anniversary which was commemorated in the former Russian Partition area with hundreds of lectures, talks, commemorative meetings and ceremonies, decorations featuring the national colours, and, first of all, street parades attended by local government representatives, religious communities, schools, handicraft guilds, and thousands of locals. In Warsaw, a demonstration of several hundred thousand went on completely quietly; its participants and observers reported that no German occupiers were seen on the streets at the time.

A hundred years of Russian rule resulted, all the same, in only a part of Kingdom dwellers even being aware of the basic facts of the history of Poland, which was also true for the intelligentsia. Doubts were raised even in apparently plain matters, such as the sequence of colours in the national flag, as evidenced in the below-quoted account of Maria Macieszyna, née Erlich, a member of the strict intellectual elite of Płock, a writer and social activist, and the wife of Aleksander Maciesza, a physician, member of the Duma, and later the mayor of Płock. This being the case, the anniversary celebrations played an important educational role, becoming a living lesson of Polish history. After 3rd May 1916, the one-hundredth anniversary of Tadeusz Kościuszko's death was celebrated (15th October 1917), along with the 55th anniversary of the outbreak of the January Insurrection – in 1918, as well as the subsequent anniversaries of the Third-of-May Constitution.

> 3rd May [1916]. We got up at six in the morning in order to embellish the balconies. It was just only five degrees Celsius, but the sky was clear and the weather beautiful. People bustled about on all the balconies in Więzienna Street, hanging out their carpets, carrying down flowers. We affixed the pennants, brought potted flowers and flower bunches along, and it all looked quite good. But no one knew it for sure whether it was the white or the red to go at the upper. What we did was we placed the white colour up, for it seemed to me they had done it like that in Galicia.
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> Maria Macieszyna, *Pamiętnik Płocczanki* ['A Płock dweller's memoir], ed. A. M. Stogowska, Płock 1996, p. 57.

The subsequent political occurrences: the proclamation of 5th November 1916, by the deed of the two emperors, of a Kingdom of Poland associated with Germany and Austro-Hungary; the formation of a separate Polish army; the 'oath crisis', with its resulting imprisonment of Józef Piłsudski in Magdeburg; and, the appointment in Warsaw of a three-member Regency Council – undermined Polish people's trust toward the occupier authorities, rather than reinforcing it. Jan Kasprowicz derided in a cattish poem the regents appointed by Kaiser Wilhelm: "May all the folks piss with joy, // With hauteur may they puff up: // Three kinglings have they employed, // A single cast's given up. // One's indwelling, second's playing, and the third's name's Kakowski."[88] The real political splits – expectations for the future, the selection of opponents and enemies, and the gradations of objectives closer and further, the belief in the country's independence and the unbiased estimation of measures and resources – all spoiled the relationships between Poles perhaps more severely than ever in their history.

Even more precipitous differences separated the Poles in Russia and those in the West. The numerical force of the Polish diaspora in Russia grew a lot in the course of the war resulting from the inflow of their compatriots from Konigsberg; in Petersburg alone (renamed in 1914 as Petrograd), the Polish community was over 130,000 now. All the national-democrat leaders were among them, including Dmowski (who left for Switzerland in as soon as 1915), Balicki (who died in Petrograd in 1916) and Wasilewski (who left Russia only after the Bolshevik Revolution). Followers of the Russian Constitutional Democratic Party, or Cadets party, formed a considerable force among the Russian Poles; their leader was Aleksander Lednicki (1866-1934), a lawyer born in Minsk, the owner of a reputable law firm and a former Duma deputy. From 1914, Lednicki headed the Polish Committee for Aiding the Victims of the War in Moscow; after the February Revolution of 1917, he set up a Democratic Club there. It was thanks to his endeavours, among others, that the Provisional Government, set up after the upheaval, issued a declaration admitting the Poles the right to independence and self-rule. Lednicki took up the chair with the Liquidation Committee for the Kingdom of Poland, a body whose purpose was to regulate all the issues relating to the winding up of Russian offices in the Kingdom. At the same time, he tried to pursue an action, via Russian diplomats, aimed at debilitating the position of R. Dmowski in the West of Europe, and moreover, opposed the building of

88 The Regency Council had in its cast two aristocrats – Zdzisław Lubomirski, Lord Mayor of Warsaw, and Józef Ostrowski, a landowner, along with Archbishop Aleksander Kakowski, Metropolitan of Warsaw.

separate Polish military formations in Russia, which made him very unpopular among Poles. He settled down in Warsaw in October 1918. Attacked from several sides, he incessantly got involved in polemics and court trials. In parallel, he gathered a considerable fortune as a legal counsel handling the businesses of some Western-European business tycoons. He eventually committed suicide, in 1934, burdened with one-sided, poorly evidenced charges.

Apart from the aforesaid declaration, the February Revolution resulted in an opening, for the Polish communities in Lithuania, Byelorussia and the Ukraine, of opportunities for unrestricted cultural, educational and scientific initiatives. Associations of this sort were set up in Wilno, Minsk and, especially, in Kiev, with its Polish University College operating from 1917, whose teaching staff included professors from Galicia and Russia, among others. Deep national and social conflicts, which soon after turned into an armed wrestle, posed a threat to that world.

The main Polish political organisation in London, Paris and Lausanne was the national-democratic Polish National Committee. It was recognised by the governments of the Entente states as the representative body of the Polish nation, which went to Roman Dmowski's credit. He and Stanisław Grabski, as the Committee's delegates, represented Poland later on at the Versailles conference.

All the competing political options endeavoured to form separate Polish armed formations to fight alongside the great armies. The largest such formation was Piłsudski's Polish Legions; however, after their refusal, in 1917, to swear an oath of loyalty to the Polish Kingdom's monarch-to-be (the German emperor was to become one), the Legions were dissolved and their soldiers and officers interned.

After the February Revolution, the Russian republican government admitted the formation of Polish corps. The 1st Corps, commanded by General Józef Dowbor-Muśnicki, was set up in Minsk, and two other such corps were formed soon after. A Polish Army was established in France in 1917, incorporating former Bayonne camp members, Poles from the German army kept in French prison camps, as well as volunteers from the United States and Canada. Their command was taken up in 1918 by General Józef Haller. The soldiers of the Polish corps in Russia and General Haller's soldiers used the opportunity to join the troops fighting on the eastern and western boundaries of the 2nd Republic.

It would be impossible to reconstruct the confounded vicissitudes of all the Polish intellectuals during the Great War – whether at home or in the emigration; in the partitioner armies' ranks or in Polish formations; in political offices or philanthropic institutions; on rally rostra or academic chairs. To indicate the most significant or particularly typical biographies would be very hard too, as the

differences between them were too large. However, a handful of biographies characteristic to individual political orientations could be indicated, on a *pars-pro-toto* basis, along with a few particularly vivid examples, bearing in mind that they would represent but a section of a multiple larger and much more complex whole.

Władysław-Leopold Jaworski (1865-1930) may be regarded as an almost ideal representative of Galicia's intellectual and political elite on the verge of the war. A graduate of the Law faculty at the Jagiellonian University, he complemented his studies in Berlin and Paris. Holding a professorship in civil law in Krakow (from 1897), he took active part in the *Stańczyk*s faction activities, being one of the initiators of the so-called neoconservative trend there, which was represented by politicians of the younger generation. He acted as a parliamentary and Council-of-State deputy, and was the editor-in-chief of *Czas*, from 1900. For several years before the war, he conducted with it an intense propaganda campaign for the Austrophilic programme, considering it the only rational guarantee for Poles to gain an independent position within the Habsburg monarchy. After the outbreak of the war, he joined the Supreme National Committee, a body co-established by the conservatives and the Committee of Confederated Independence Parties. In his numerous publications, written in German, he argued that a rebuilt Poland was the prerequisite for peace in Central/Eastern Europe. During the oath crisis, he strove for maintenance of the Polish military formation. When the most outstanding Legion officers were put before the Austrian court in 1918, Jaworski, in protest, renounced his post of privy councillor to the court and finally withdrew from political activity. Ailing and paralysed, he never resumed his political activities, even though Poland was finally made free.

Since his studies at Petersburg's Roads and Transportation Institute, Aleksander Dębski (1857-1935) was associated with the workers' movement, he co-organised the 1st Proletariat Party and the Polish Socialist Party and was active with the latter's emigration structures, he also attended congresses of the 2nd International. From 1899 he stayed in the U.S. and became the most eminent exponent of Polish independence thought there. An ardent follower of Piłsudski, he distributed Polish political literature in the States and attended dozens of lectures, debates and rallies aimed at popularising the issue of Poland's independence. He imitated the establishment of a National Defence Committee which was tasked with collecting contributions for Piłsudski's military action and for the benefit of victims of hostilities in the home country. He visited Poland twice during the war, providing Piłsudski with cash and with his first volunteers. He finally returned from the U.S. in 1919. He died while in office as a PPS senator.

Marian Dąbrowski (1882-1925), Dębski's younger by twenty-five years, was born and educated in Warsaw. As a member of PPS's Combat Organisation,

he had to flee in 1906 to Krakow and thereafter, to the West. He subsequently studied social and historical sciences in Brussels, and was in parallel active as a member of the Belgian section of the PPS, and it was there that he met and married Maria Szumska, who later on became a writer. He returned to Galicia once the war broke out, and August 1914 saw him enlist with the 1st Rifle Regiment commanded by J. Piłsudski. He remained with the Legions throughout the formation's entire campaign, and wrote feuilletons from the front, on the spot (later published as a two-volume edition). He propagated education among the soldiers (in as soon as 1916, he set up a soldiers' university in Baranowicze, affiliated to the Legion's 5th Regiment), an activity he continued after 1918. In independent Poland he held governmental posts, and wrote works on the Orthodox Church and faith in Poland. While preparing an extensive study on this topic, he died a sudden death of a cardiac nature.

Stanisław Grabski (1871-1949) was an economist educated in Warsaw and Berlin. In his younger years, he made a way typical for his generation: he co-operated with the *Głos* editorial board, associated himself with the socialist movement in Galicia and in the emigration, and wrote articles for *Przedświt*. Influenced by Z. Balicki, he came closer to the National League, and finally parted with the PSS in 1901. He dwelled in Lwów from 1905 onward, teaching at the Lwów University and the Agricultural Academy in Dublany; also, he was head of the agriculture section with the National Department. With time, he became one of the nationalist leaders in Galicia. On the verge of the war, he initiated the formation by the national democrats of paramilitary troops in Eastern Galicia, which were meant to counterbalance the Riflemen's Associations. After Lwów was seized by the Russians, he edited the magazine *Zjednoczenie*, which decisively opted for Russia as the war went on. As the Austrian army approached Lwów in July 1915, he went away to Kiev and then to Petersburg, where he opted for the creation of a Polish army in Russia. After the Bolshevik revolution, he found his way to London and Paris, via Murmansk, where he was co-opted as a member of the Polish National Committee. From 1919-21, he took part in the negotiations concerning almost all the frontier conflicts involving the emerging Polish state – in Cieszyn, the Ukraine, and Upper Silesia. As a delegate of Poland, he participated in the peace talks at Versailles and Riga. He several times held ministerial offices in the 2nd Republic. With time, he parted with the nationalist circles, confronting the slogan 'Poland for Poles!' with 'Poles for Poland!'

It might be disputable whether it is right to have Julia Ledóchowska (1865-1939), an aristocrat and founder of the Order of Grey Ursuline Nuns who devoted themselves to charity and educational work, classed as member of the intelligentsia. Yet, her public activity fully legitimates such an approach. She obtained her

university diploma in Krakow; in Orléans, she received the patent as a teacher of French. In the 1880s, she joined the Ursuline nunnery in Krakow, adopting the name of Urszula. Sister Urszula worked as a teacher in the Krakow conventual high school (gymnasium), was made the convent's superioress (1904) and then moved (in 1907) to St. Catherine's Gymnasium in Petersburg. After the war's breakout, being an Austrian subject, she was expelled from Russia – and settled in Stockholm, where she carried out vigorous activity in the field of religion (for example, she founded Sweden's first Catholic periodical), education (organising language-learning courses) and charity, co-operating with Henryk Sienkiewicz's Committee for Polish War Victims' Relief. In the first place, however, she popularised the Polish question in Sweden and across Scandinavia, delivering dozens of lectures, writing articles, and publishing the book *Polonica* – a collection of texts by Swedish, Danish and Norwegian authors on Polish subject-matters, in these three languages. Back at home, she put much effort into the development of the Order; articles for the Catholic press and books for children written at that time also go to her credit.

Roman Dyboski (1883-1945), a native of Cieszyn, who studied in Krakow, Vienna and England, was, in 1911, made a professor of English studies at the Jagiellonian University. Called up in 1914 for the Austrian army, he was taken prisoner by the Russians and spent seven years in Russia. Released from a POW camp, he undertook community service and scholarly work to the benefit of the Polish diaspora in Russia, for example, by writing articles for *Myśl Narodowa*, a monthly published in Petrograd. Back at home, he resumed his university chair, wrote dozens of works in English and delivered hundreds of lectures, popularising Polish literature, history and the present. A number of studies in English and American literature – with a focus on Shakespeare – go to this scholar's credit.

At last, the merits of two outstanding Polish artists: Henryk Sienkiewicz and Ignacy-Jan Paderewski, are not to be neglected. Enjoying enormous popularity in Europe and beyond, none of them hesitated to make use of it for the good of Poland and its people. Sienkiewicz, the then-quite-recent Nobel laureate for literature (1905), was suddenly confronted with the war while on his estate of Oblęgorek in Kielce Land; he found his way to Switzerland directly from there, via Krakow and Vienna. Once there, in Vevey on the Geneva Lake, he founded – with help from Paderewski, among others – the Swiss General Committee for Polish War Victims' Relief. As its chairman, he organised financial aid in all West-European countries, till his death on 15th November 1916, making use of his personal contacts among the elites and acquiring, for collaboration, Poles and foreigners alike.

Paderewski – the composer and, primarily, the world-famous virtuoso pianist – supported Sienkiewicz's initiative and became a General Committee

delegate to America and moreover, founded its branch office, called the Polish Relief Fund, in London. He pursued spirited activity around the idea of an independent Poland, primarily in the U.S., to which end his close acquaintance with President Woodrow Wilson proved helpful (Paderewski himself named him, rather naively, his own "great friend who is highly respected by me", his "friendship for me and, above all, for my homeland proving unshaken"[89]). He represented the Paris-based Polish National Committee in the U.S. and contributed to organising Polish volunteer troops. It was probably partly due to his efforts that President Wilson, on presenting in his proclamation to the Congress, on 8th January 1918, a list of fourteen conditions enabling the making of a future peace, mentioned independence for Poland and the country's ensured access to the sea (item 13). Paderewski returned to his home country in December 1918; as he travelled through Germany, he was told to never leave the train, but his passage through Poznań became a pretext for a mass demonstration and a factor mobilising Polish society in the face of a rising in Wielkopolska. The following year saw him in office as Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs with a government supported by the National-Democratic Party; and, Paderewski was the one who signed the Versailles peace treaty on behalf of Poland.

The upheavals in Russia and the Wilson proclamation, along with the military defeats of the Central States, caused that by 1918, the hope to regain independence – so irrational four years earlier – had grown quite realistic, and began overwhelming even the sceptics. Władysław-Leopold Jaworski noted down on 8th October: "I am getting the impression of something grand, fearful and mysterious, coming over"[90].

A secret organisation called the Polish Military Organisation [POW] was becoming prepared domestically for combat against the occupiers. Founded by Piłsudski in August 1914, the POW initially operated within the Kingdom of Poland, and then expanded to Galicia and the Ukraine. The progressing decomposition of the German army enabled the Warsaw-based Regency Council to issue, early in October, acts of law abolishing the occupation authorities and depriving Governor Hans von Beseler the command of the army. On 6th/7th November, a Provisional People's Government of the Polish Republic was appointed, led by Ignacy Daszyński; POW troops set about disarming German soldiers. Piłsudski, released from his German prison, returned to Warsaw. At that same time,

89 Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Mary Lawton, *Pamiętniki* ['Memoirs'], ed. 2, Kraków 1967, p. 493.

90 Władysław Ludwik Jaworski, *Diariusz 1914-1918* ['Diary, 1914 -8'], p. 283.

Austro-Hungary was becoming decomposed: the nations forming this monarchy proceeded to form their own states. A Polish Liquidation Committee – the first Polish provincial government – was set up in Krakow on 28th October. In the night of 30th/31st October, the Poles from the Austrian garrison in Krakow captured the barracks, which enabled them to take over the real power in the city. Lwów and other Eastern-Galician towns saw struggles against the Ukrainians break out. Two months later, an uprising started in Poznań. Poland, now independent, commenced its wrestle for its existence and the route of its borders.

And this marked a moment of triumph for the Polish intelligentsia: the great ideal they had been proclaiming for over a hundred years had finally come true, owing, to a significant extent, to their own efforts, the sacrifice of their thought, labour, and blood. In a new Poland, it was the intelligentsia that would be assigned the central role – the leader of the whole nation, the superior force, which was due to serve but also, to rule; to fuel the zest and soothe the disputes; incessantly labour for the good of the regained homeland and, finally, meet their much deserved recognition. Cautious voices, to say nothing of sceptical, like that of Maria Dąbrowska, were audible extremely seldom:

> Central Europe is turning into a piece of rubble, including the whole of its militaristic concept; likewise, the humanitarian imperialism of England will collapse, in the way tsarism did. Spring is probably coming over, and happiness of the peoples; ah!, so many sins are they still going to commit, those peoples; how awful things might still be going on; for how long would churlishness still be raging and ruling, under the pretence of democratic ideas; banditism and thievery will likewise represent themselves as the most laudable virtues.
> Maria Dąbrowska, *Dzienniki* ['Diary'], ed. Tadeusz Drewnowski, vol. 1, Warszawa 1988, pp. 118-119.

1918 marked the real beginning of everything, under the circumstances, that would not bode well for the new country's future. Things were begotten in the areas that for more than a century had remained within the limits of the three different state organisms; and hence, the dissimilarities in political culture, economics and the inhabitants' psyches could have seemed insurmountable. Millions of Poles still remained in the emigration diaspora. In lieu of the one-partitioning powers, new opponents appeared – the nations aspiring to have a state of their own – in areas Poles considered their own! Deep worldview splits still remained in Polish society. In Poland and, likewise, in the whole of Europe, emaciated with war, a pandemic called 'Spanish flu' rampaged around, devouring, in totality, some twenty million lives, which doubled the hostilities' victims figure. All the same, the Polish intelligentsia, having put into practice their dream of Poland, spun their 'dream of power' in their own, at-last-independent state: something they had in fact never tasted, in the space of their entire history.

Conclusion

During the entire Partition period, the word 'homeland' or 'home country' [Polish, *ojczyzna*] remained on the lips of the most nimble and most expressive Polish *wieszcz*s ('prophet-bards'), penetrating historians and authors of political treatises which were meant to set new horizons for Poles. The word/notion was inflected in all the ways possible by an army of second-rank rhymesters, third-rate annalists and zealous scribblers who would have been willing to say of themselves what Zygmunt Krasiński wrote in his poem *Tęsknota*: "Wherev'r I go, there's things that hurt and bore me, // My lost homeland chases me with her phantom."

The regaining of the country did not inspire as many, and so eminent, authors – at least in the beginning. The most popular and most willingly published coryphaei of patriotic elations of the earliest years of the 20th century devoted a tribute of doleful and solemn poems to the rebuilding of independence. Patriotic, and even jingoistic, topics reappeared in a triumphant parade in short stores or novellas published by the press in episodes, moral tales in calendars, and instructive pieces for Polish brood. Publicists and journalists under various flags wrote of a regained and successfully defended independence, using ornate metaphors which soon became overused.

And yet, the reconstruction of a state that had ceased to exist 123 years before was certainly a wonder worthy of no less marvellous eulogists. Polish culture, in contact with the three dominant cultures of the partitioning powers, superior to it civilisation-wise in many respects, preserved its internal coherence to the extent that, in spite of evident Partition-dependent differences, one could notice in 1918 its unity denying any splits. The reinforcement and defence of this unity over more than a hundred years was certainly the major merit of the Polish intelligentsia of the Partition era. Also the idea of irredentism and construction of the fundamentals of one's own sovereignty and statehood appeared in 1918 as an axis around which an essential part of Polish society could be united; indeed, for a significant period of the Partition time, it was the intelligentsia that proved to be an important and, for several decades, the most major propagator, of the idea.

Intelligentsia members greatly contributed to the reconstruction and defence of the new Polish state in 1918 and in the following years – and, especially, to

the mobilisation of the entire society in the face of external threats (which was especially evident during the Polish-Bolshevik war of 1920). Even graver merit went to the credit of Polish intellectuals – the people with varied biographies, exponents of diverse worldview stances, generations and professions – in the enormous work of merging the state out of the lands belonging for dozens, if not hundreds, of years to different political and civilisational organisms. It was primarily owing to their effort that the Second Republic proved capable of meeting the major challenges it faced after regaining its independence: an agrarian reform and social reforms; enactment of a Constitution; solving the most urgent economic problems and stabilisation of the currency; and, the introduction of general compulsory education, the rationale behind which was to even out the literacy of the population of the country's western and eastern provinces.

The regained state put an end to some of the debates summarised in this story; some other debates were extended or even inflamed, though.

The reconstruction of an independent Republic marked the end of the debate on the emigration of talents, which had stirred Poles every so often. 1918 saw the disappearance of most of the political or intellectual reasons, not to mention those related to living conditions, which before then forced educated Poles to emigrate. Faculties in the reactivated and newly-opening tertiary schools were often taken charge of by scholars returning home from their exile: after Warsaw University and Warsaw Technology University, which had opened their doors wide for their lecturers and students while the war was still on, the University of Wilno was reinstated in 1919, its Poznań counterpart was established, and a non-public Catholic University of Lublin was opened (1918), those being followed by a series of other specialist higher schools in Warsaw, Krakow, Lwów, and elsewhere.

Several hundred professors, scientists and research staff members, who before 1918 were affiliated with foreign schools, now returned home; some of them were attracted by the prospects of professional development offered now at home, others – mostly scholars from Russia overwhelmed by the revolution – returned under pressure of the changed political conditions. Many of them resolved to pursue their careers in the areas of politics or diplomacy. Two of the three Presidents that Poland had in the interwar period were scientists working abroad before 1918 (Gabriel Narutowicz, the first President of the Republic, a design/construction engineer, was a professor at the Zurich Polytechnic; Ignacy Mościcki, the third, worked as a chemist in Great Britain and Switzerland, among other countries). The large-scale economic projects, such as the construction of a seagoing port in Gdynia or the establishment of the so-called Central Industrial District, offered decent job opportunities to engineers, technologists and technicians at home.

The accusations of the exportation of talents and knowledge from Poland, the country's depletion in the name of serving others, and deserting the homeland while in need, miraculously lost its importance, almost overnight. Ernest Malinowski, Helena Modrzejewska, Maria Skłodowska-Curie and Joseph Conrad became reasons for national pride among Poles without any objection; even Conrad was forgiven his sins of yore, as "during the war, he hotly felt his affiliation to Poland", wrote pro-Polish articles and sent memorials to the Foreign Office on behalf of the Polish cause.[91] The scolding about the adverse impact of foreign countries on the Polish student youth died down too. The choices made during the war by young Poles from France, Switzerland, or even the United States – their volunteering participation in military formations, first of all – did not confirm the conviction that emigration exerted a denationalising influence. What is more, the unprecedented bloom of scientific, literary and artistic life in the 2nd Republic was possible thanks, among other things, to Europe-wide contacts marinated by Polish scholars and students before 1914. Peregrinations of Polish people across Europe and their connections with non-Polish intellectual centres, although forced to a large degree by the national bondage, turned out, at the end of the day, to be extremely beneficial to the vernacular culture.

The role of Poles in the world was now willingly highlighted by the nationalists and publicists associated with the ruling camp and concerned with creating the vision of a strong country, one that would pave the way for the avant-garde of civilisational progress. To illustrate the trend, two books published in the already-independent 2nd Republic: *Polska w kulturze powszechnej* ['Poland in the universal culture'], a very early (1918) 2-volume edition by historiosopher Feliks Koneczny who was close to the national democrats; and, *O Polakach w cywilizacjach świata do końca wieku XIX* ['Poles in the civilisations of the world'] by Józef-Hieronim Retinger, a politician and publicist. Both of these works unconditionally annexed the coerced and by-choice emigrants, representing any profession and any domain of art, to the spiritual family of Polish people, thus apparently proving that "in all the countries they have traversed in their wandering, the Poles have indeed well earned our gratefulness."[92]

As independence was regained, the limitations that restrained the development of Polish science and culture in the Partition period abated. Scientists, scholars and artists were now offered by their own state what they were so much

91 Józef Hieronim Retinger, *Polacy w cywilizacjach świata do końca wieku XIX* ['Poles in the world's civilisations until the end of the 19th century'], Warszawa 1937, p. 212.

92 Ibidem, p. 187.

short of in the nineteenth century: prospects of financial support, university faculties, scholarships and grants, independent scientific and artistic associations – and, primarily, countrywide agencies that unified, supported and stimulated intellectual and artistic activities. Under the auspices of the Polish Academy of Learning (*Polska Akademia Umiejętności*; founded on the basis of the Krakow Academy of Learning) and the Warsaw Scientific Society, Polish science gained a real chance to redress its age-long negligence; in some domains, such as mathematics, microbiology or anthropology, it attained a European level indeed.

The two decades between the two World Wars was a time of unprecedented publishing, and of literary and artistic activities. Polish literature and arts, now freed from the corset of patriotic topics – that indefatigable "phantom of the lost homeland" – experienced fertile development; the contact with various intellectual milieus all over Europe was certainly among the stimulants. It is worth emphasising that Poles of varied ethnic backgrounds contributed to this flourish – among them, the assimilated Jews who considered the Polish language and culture to be their own.

Similarly, the discrepancies incrementing in the course of the 19th century between the provinces of the partitioned country seemed to be fading in the melting-pot of the 2nd Republic. Integration of the lands and communities so different from one another after more than a hundred years of division has proved to be one of the greatest and most admirable achievements of the state created in 1918. Yet, the divergences manifested in aspects of civilisation, ideologies, morals and mores, or even languages, and a significantly different attitude toward public authorities, local government activities or the role of the Catholic Church in public life, turned out to be a burden that was hard to get rid of.

The Second Republic commenced its independent existence as a state with a significant share of citizens who could not read patriotic proclamations or sign electoral registers. Whilst illiteracy was rather unheard-of in Wielkopolska, Pomerania and Silesia (before World War One, the illiterate accounted for a mere 5% of the Prussian Partition's population), it appeared with increasing strength as one moved eastwards, with 57% illiterate in the former Russian Partition territory and to a lesser extent, 40%, in Galicia, particularly in the east of the province. Polish rural and small-town populations were affected, along with national minorities. The other tensions that frustrated the national unity and shared enthusiasm of 1918 were primarily concentrated within the intelligentsia stratum.

Coming from the various partition provinces, educated Poles involved in public life entered their country's independence with a different stock of experience and aspirations. First of all, the practice of parliamentary and local-government activity experienced by Polish intellectuals of the three Partitions

that resulted from the partitioning states' political practices proved disproportionate. Galician people proved best capable of dealing with both spheres. And, the least experience in both was the case with former Polish dwellers of the Russian Partition. These facts challenged the conviction of the intelligentsia from the former Kingdom, and especially of Warsaw (aspiring after more than a century for the position of a national metropolis!), that it was them, with their numerical force, internal unity, awareness, modern quality and independence merits, who ought to take charge of the major offices across the country. Similar aspirations were shown by the intelligentsia of Krakow or Lwów, who appeared convinced that it was them who displayed the qualifications suitable for governing the country, due to the sophistication and practice they had mastered in Galicia. Those ambitions, not infrequently expressed in a groundlessly arrogant manner, clearly hurt the regional pride of Silesians, the people of Wielkopolska, Volhynia, or Wilno. The grievances accrued after 1918, survived the entire interwar period, some of them lasting even longer, although – as is the case with most complexes – they did not always or everywhere refer to real wrongs, but rather, imaginary ones.

Still, the main split continually went along the lines set years before by the Revolution of 1905-7 and the following propaganda campaigns. In the 2nd Republic, the tradition of Partitions and their heroes belonged to both parties. Tadeusz Kościuszko, Adam Mickiewicz and Romuald Traugutt became the fixed figures of patriotic celebrations, increasingly stripped of their real excitement. However, beside the flamboyant official anniversary celebrations, or rather in their background, another Republic – if not other republics – was budding.

The national-democratic camp rightly prided themselves on their merits in the preservation of national substance in the face of Russian and German oppression; in exchange, they demanded for themselves a pivotal role in wielding authority over their regained country. Yet, the subsequent political settlements – the proclamation of the 'Small' Constitution in 1919 and of the March Constitution of 1921, the election of the first President of the 2nd Republic, and, finally, the upheaval of May 1926, which erased any semblances of unity among Poles – took place contrary to the nationalists. Moreover, they occurred by means of the votes, influences and actions of the forces that were most invidious to the national-democrats – that is, the socialist and national minorities, especially the Jews. The national camp's frustration degenerated into ignominious acts of propagandist and physical violence, such as the frenetic anti-intellectual, anti-liberal and anti-Jewish campaign, which resulted in the assassination of President Narutowicz at the Warsaw 'Zachęta' building on 16th December 1922 – and, in the later years, the increasingly brutal anti-Semitic actions.

No less legitimately than the national democrats, the socialists demanded that their merits be recognised with regards to the introduction of social regulations regulating the norms of labour for ordinary people, as well as the defence of weaker social groups which sought emancipation in the course of the 19th century, particularly women and Jews. Also for the socialists, in spite of the initial choking with unity, the 2nd Republic turned out to be an imperfect, insufficient, well-nigh, alien state. A jingoistic, Catholic Poland was not the daydream that Ludwik Krzywicki, Zofia Daszyńska-Golińska or Helena Radlińska would have striven to make come true. It was to no surprise, then, that this particular Warsaw milieu was where the Free Polish University (*Wolna Wszechnica Polska*) evolved out of the Society of Scientific Courses, based on the 'Flying University' tradition. It was a private tertiary school which played an important part as a leftist research and university institution, independent of the state, and a qualification gaining centre for teaching staff of various levels (a branch in Łódź was opened in 1927).

Radical activists of the Polish Socialist Party and, particularly, the Communist Party of Poland (proscribed in as early as 1919 as a Bolshevik agents' network) denied any middle ground with the Polish state. The most extreme contesters from the Left and the Right met in the 1930s at what was named the 'Place of Isolation' – i.e. a detention camp – prepared by the 2nd Republic authorities in Bereza-Kartuska near Brześć-Litewski (Brest-Litovsk), following the contemporary German, Swedish and other European models.

Among the groups dissatisfied with what the independent Republic had brought them, workers and peasants can be mentioned: they systematically expressed their discontent through strikes, demonstrations, riots and armed clashes that were shaking the state virtually over the entire interwar period. That same state, which according to its Constitution guaranteed equality to its citizens, proved even more alien to its national minorities, the Jews in the first place. The disillusionment was probably the bitterest among the intelligentsia, for it was connected with a loss of the uppermost hopes of 1918. After the dramatic worldview differences, another factor came that heightened the disillusionment: the Great Depression of the 1930s. A severe drop in the incomes of intelligentsia families, which was evident chiefly with the wealthiest intelligentsia of Lwów, Krakow and other large Galician towns: the group that years before then was one of the main beneficiaries of Galicia's pre-war golden era, deepened the sense of bashful disappointment. "Tomato-sauced mackerels, sauced mackerels: // […] This is *your* Poland: with all that's hers! // ("Tomato-sauced mackerels – trout!)", Konstanty-Ildefons Gałczyński sneered bitterly in 1936.

The total outcome of the Second Republic, and the determination of the place occupied within it by the more or less intensely involved parts of its intelligentsia,

is clearly beyond the scope of this work. It would be hard to obviate it completely, though, when considering the hopes and expectations that Polish intellectuals entertained before the Great War, in the course of the warfare and right after it ended. Also, it is hard to resist the impression that the twenty-or-so years between the wars, with the period's attainments and defeats, heroes and antiheroes, have obscured the accomplishments of the forerunners. The occurrences that followed in the subsequent decades: the Second World War, the communist People's Republic of Poland, the Solidarity movement years and the emergence of the Third Republic have provided new 'celebration figures', pushing off from their pedestal not only Kościuszko, Mickiewicz and Traugutt, but also those who in a state retrieved after more than a hundred years seemed to be undoubted candidates for the national pantheon.

Why, then, to demand attention for the heroes of the Partition period: activists that were not lucky enough to achieve a measurable success; 'organic workers' who perhaps wanted to fight but found their strengths, prospects for success and the frenzy element too weak; idealists who had to cheat themselves and the others on a daily basis; advocates of conciliation who cherished their hidden hope for more? Why to speak up for Karol Marcinkiewicz, Hipolit Cegielski, Józef Szujski, Michał Bobrzyński, Stefan Buszczyński, Józef Białynia Chołodecki, Aleksander Świętochowski, Bolesław Prus, Eliza Orzeszkowa, Piotr Chmielowski, Maria Konopnicka, Karol Benni, and Aleksander Kraushar? Why Wilhelm Feldman, Jadwiga Szczawińska-Dawidowa, Józef Potocki, Ludwik Krzywicki, Stefania Sempołowska, Edwarda Abramowski, and Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz?

They were among those affected by the irony of Polish history. Bolesław Prus, the leading figure in Warsaw Positivism, has had many a street, city square and school bear his name all over the country. He has monuments erected in his honour too – just to mention the one in Warsaw's Krakowskie-Przedmieście Street, or in Nałęczów, which he elevated in the end of the 19th century, by means of his personal authority, to the rank of a leading health resort in the country. But Prus himself sneered at the Polish fondness for statue-mania and rejected the memorialising sculpted in bronze or marble as a form of homage paid to eminent individuals. He daydreamed of his name being borne someday by reading libraries, asylums or baths – those vanguards of care, hygiene and wisdom in a future wise, healthy, caring and protective Poland. He scorned monuments deep down in his heart, so now he has a supernatural-sized monument in Warsaw, while the 'Zdrojowy' Park in Nałęczów features a lovely bench with his effigy, by which the health-resort patients and school trips willingly take pictures of themselves.

Ludwik Krzywicki has also gained one of the artistically clumsiest monuments in Poland – the one erected on the Vistula embankment in his native town of Płock, plus a lane in Warsaw. But it is Dionizy Henkiel that has probably encountered the worst lot: this Lithuanian, speaking with a broad Eastern-Borderland accent, the maker of the writers and annalists whom he received, treated to tea and educated in his cramped Warsaw flat on Mazowiecka Street. He moreover took part in the January Insurrection, was a deportee, and afterwards, a Warsaw journalist – and besides all this, Mr. Henkiel devoted a large portion of his vital energy to see to it that his un-Polish name be inflected with observance of the Polish grammatical paradigm. At hearing his name pronounced 'Henkel', after the German, he responded almost with fury, whilst 'Henkiel' was something he was ready to give his indigenously Polish soul away for.

Today, in the Warsaw borough of Żoliborz, right next to the streets named after Krasiński, Wyspiański and Juliusz Kossak, 'plac Henkla' – '*Henkel* Square' – is located. The spot on the map that was supposed to timelessly commemorate Dionizy Henkiel – the 'judicial oracle' from Mazowiecka Street, the man who was "an affectionate moorhen of those innocent nestlings"[93], i.e. the principal writers, columnists and historians of the late 19th century.

The whimsical, meandric collective memory of Poles of the 20th and the 21st centuries has been weaving its way, taking turns, pouncing about, making a muscle, staggering with exhaustion, beating its own or someone else's breast, rejecting certain apparently redundant burdens and carrying the load without which it would be easier to march forward. To make attempts at reinstating what was ousted from this memory seems to be a backbreaking exercise, virtually doomed to ridicule. And still, regardless of what we are really after in our search – be it amusing facetiae, instructive anecdotes, academic instructions, spiteful parables or pieces of simple guidance for the future – we shall find there whatever could be of use to us; a veritable *embarras du choix*.

Aleksander Świętochowski, the guru of Warsaw Positivists, one of the most consistent advocates of the right to emancipate the weaker groups and individuals against the stronger ones, was a domestic tyrant: he humiliated and betrayed his wife, and did not prevent his firstborn son Zenon, who longed for his father he seldom had an opportunity to meet, from bunking on the corridor floor by the closed door of his study. When the child died in 1890, Świętochowski

93 A. Zaleski, *Towarzystwo warszawskie. Listy do przyjaciółki przez Baronową XYZ* ['The Warsaw society. Letters to a female friend, by Baroness XYZ'], ed. R. Kołodziejczyk, Warszawa 1971; *Zza kulis Warszawy* ['From Warsaw's behind-the-scenes'], Kraków 1901, p. 128.

notified his friends by means of his regular *Liberum veto* feuilleton published on a weekly basis in *Prawda*.

Owing to his severe agoraphobia, Bolesław Prus avoided travel, and traversed broad squares only if accompanied by others, squinting nervously; all the same, he managed to enrich Polish literature with the best and the most vivid description of metropolitan Paris (in *Lalka*), and with the dramatic scene of a solar eclipse in ancient Egypt (in *Faraon*). He was an educator who moralised without falling into a condescending tone, and loved, never losing his sense of humour. But he had no children of his own, and experienced the suicide of his only charge (Emil Trembiński, called 'Psujak' ('Spoiler'), a relative and fosterling of Aleksander and Oktawia Głowacki, who killed himself at the age of eighteen, in 1904).

Henryk Sienkiewicz had an inclination of taking up great issues and admiring great ladies, such as Jadwiga Łuszczewska or Helena Modrzejewska. His role was particularly important at the salon receptions of the former: among the most loyal 'courtiers' at Deotyma's court, which brushed with ridiculousness, he served as a 'butler', yielding to the grandiose mannerisms of those receptions, as imposed by the hostess, and eagerly taking part in the lectures going on for hours, and in solemn dead-and-alive jubilee celebrations of the old-generation authors: Antoni-Edward Odyniec, Adam Pług, or Ms. Łuszczewska herself. However, at the 1908 funeral of this national bardess, and his own zealous protectress, he is said to have recited the following couplet (paraphrasing a well-known Polish nursery rhyme) to another mourner's ear – as the mocking account of T. 'Boy' Żeleński has it:

Wlaał kotek na płotek i mruga.	A kitten sits on the fence and blinks,
Mam w d… Deotymę i Pługa.	Deotyma and Pług's a stuff that stinks.[94]

Paulina Kuczalska-Reinschmit, one of the pioneers in the Polish feminist movement, sometimes called its founding mother, edited the Lwów magazine *Ster* like a despotic proprietor, blind and deaf to the remarks made by her associates, male or female. Years earlier, her father Leon Kuczalski had caused a bankruptcy of their family estates in the Ukraine; in line with the late-nineteenth-century convention, Paulina could only marry well afterwards. Her husband Stanisław Reinschmit, so well selected and matched, infected her with syphilis; as a result, the wife lost one of her eyes. Half-blind, she still managed to set the horizons for the Polish women's movement.

94 Cf. Z. Leśnodorski, *Wśród ludzi mojego miasta. Wspomnienia i zapiski* ['Among the people of my town. Memories and records'], Kraków 1968, p. 52.

There are a number of such paradoxes that could be quoted from the history of Poland and its intelligentsia. Another such is the fact that the tradition of the 'Flying University', a school that was unambiguously associated with the political Left, was resumed in communist Poland – once the need reappeared for creating a circulation of information and a self-education system independent of the authorities. In 1977, in Warsaw and, thereafter, in a few other big cities, illegal lectures in history, the history of literature and of political life were kicked off, referring in their idea and name to the initiative of a hundred years previous. A new Society of Scientific Courses was set up in 1978. Again, the lectures were held at private dwellings, and the lecturers, again, featured outstanding Polish scholars and penmen who, once again, only wished by doing so to make up for "the deficiencies of the official education, and for the practical and ideological restriction of the freedom of science".[95]

But, what is the most crucial, most ridiculous, most pitiable, and most valiant thing that the Polish intelligentsia has forgotten since 1918? The paradox continues: they have forgotten themselves. Inside disputes, enthusiasm and hatred, cynicism and hope, disposition toward great sacrifices and uncertainty of their own position, a split into the 'good' and the 'evil' ones – not to be proven but trusted without reservation: all this was true of the Polish intelligentsia a hundred years ago – and continues to be so today.

95 Quoted from the Society's manifesto, published in the illegal *Zapis* magazine, 1978, no. 6; after: M. Fik, *Kultura polska po Jałcie. Kronika lat 1944-1981* ['The Polish culture after the Yalta Conference, 1944-81: a chronicle'], Warszawa 1991, p. 769.

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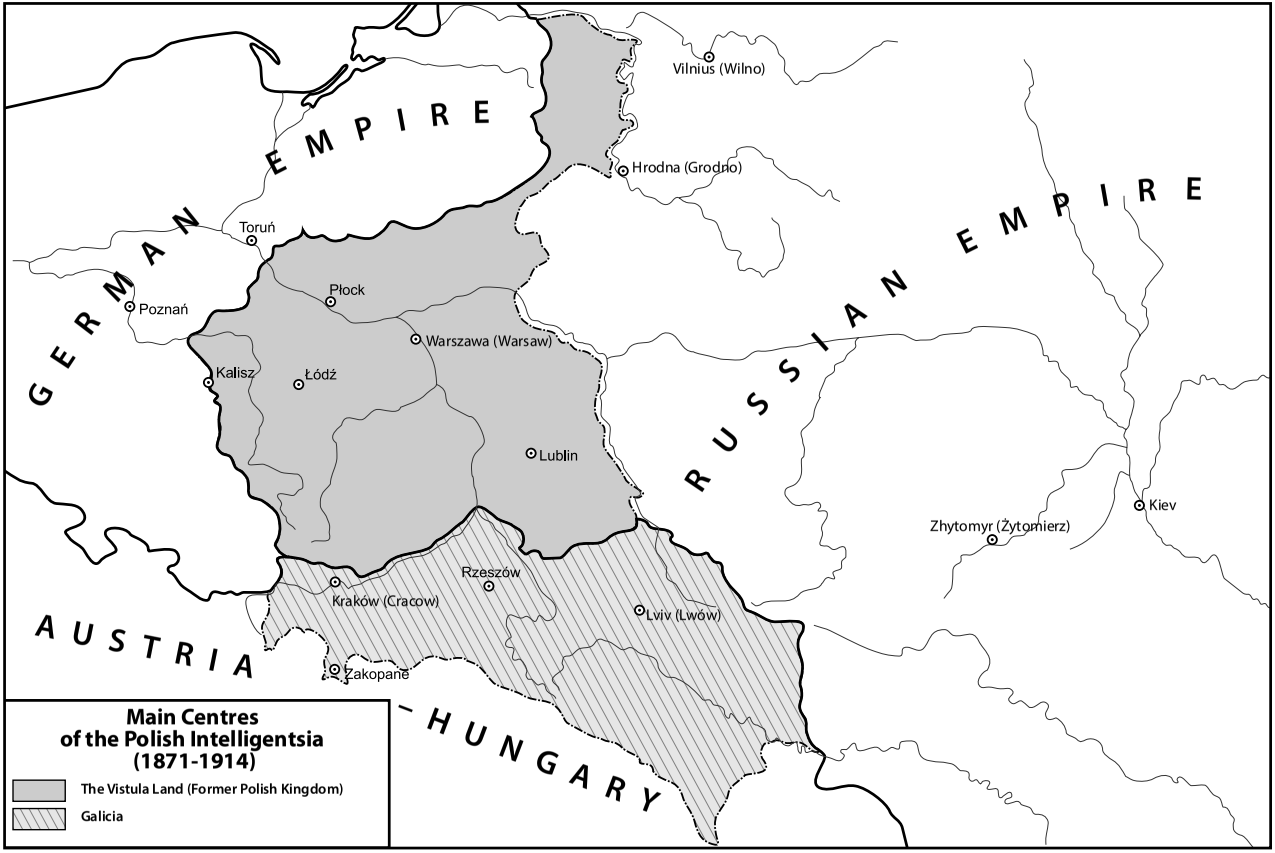
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