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The „National Democrats“—Endecja—Attitude to the Jewish Question at the Outset (1895—1905)

Any discussion of the „Endecja” must start from the premise that this was not a monolithic Party but a „camp”, at all events in the period under review here. There was indeed a large measure of common ground, but there were also differing shades of opinion, and in the course of time these became the source of schisms among the ranks and file.

The „Endecja” aspired to take in people of all classes and widely different social origins. This public was to be welded together by the sole cement of the all-Polish national idea, which would subordinate particularist and class interests to the overall national aim. In practice, the „Endecja” camp in the occupied regions of partitioned Poland comprised mainly the middle class, the intelligentsia and, in Eastern Galicia, estate-owners as well, who saw this camp as the main defender of their social and economic class against the new national aspirations of the Ukrainians. Later on, peasants joined the movement and a few workers too. The „Endecja’s” influence eventually grew to such an extent that it was feared that this camp would dominate the whole Polish public, especially in the Russian-occupied region.

In the 1920s, when independent Poland had parliamentary government, „Endecja” was the largest fraction in the Constituent Assembly and later one of the main fractions in the following parliaments. What is more, its ideas spread wide in the public, and in the 1930s, especially after Pilsudski’s death, his successors adopted large slices of „Endecja” ideology, particularly with regard to Jews. The extent of „Endecja’s” influence largely fixed the nature of the relations between the Polish people and the Jews of Poland for better and for worse — mainly for the worse.

All the researchers who have studied the history of the „Endecja” — and there are quite a few of them — have stressed the centrality of anti-semitism in its ideology and politics, but hardly any of them have gone at all deep into the matter. This is true of both East and West. The motives for ignoring the issue are partly a question of apologetics

and partly of other considerations that we need not go into here. In particular this refers to research on the first period of the growth of the „Endecja”. We shall therefore try to deal briefly with some aspects of „Endecja” anti-semitic attitude, as it emerges from the writings of three of the founders of the camp, and particularly those of Roman Dmowski.

In our view, the clue to an understanding of the Endecja’s success is to be found in the historical changes that occurred among the Poles from the late 1880’s onwards. The failure of the 1863—64 uprising and the accompanying repression brought about a radical reversal in Polish political thinking. The universalist, romantic approach of the rebel was replaced by positivism and an ideology of planned, „organic” work focussed on „the day of details”, that is to say, economic, cultural and social activity. The purpose was indeed to strengthen Poland’s social and national foundations, but to do this within the cadre of the existing order and consciously renounce any attempt at rebellion against the State. The figure of the combatant fighting on all the barricades under the slogan, „For our liberty and yours”, was replaced by that of the entrepreneur, the banker, the industrialist and the merchant. These were not heroic figures but in the existing circumstances they were more useful to Poland than those whom they replaced. The ideas of Herbert Spencer, Buckle, Comte and the rest of the positivists struck root among the intelligentsia. Polish society suffered a thorough shake-up, especially in the Russian-occupied region: the Polish aristocracy disappeared from the scene as a leading element — many were killed in the fighting, thousands were exiled to Siberia, others were forced to leave their estates as a result of the land reform and the freeing of the serfs under Russian rule. At this very time, Congress Poland underwent accelerated industrialization and urbanization, a process that the Jews had a good share in. It looked as if the dream of the renewal of Poland’s independence was over for ever.

This state of affairs lasted for some twenty years. An about-turn began to be perceptible in the 1880’s more particularly among part of the younger generation that grew up after the uprising. The first revolutionary internationalist Party, the „Proletariat”, came into being and then its successor — the Polish Socialist Nationalists (PPS). As early as 1887 a secret Polish „League” was formed in exile, „Liga Polska”, which included a variety of elements in its ranks, and which set itself the mission of reviving the fight for Polish independence in its pre-Partition frontiers. This and other secret organizations drew their sustenance mainly from the intellectual heritage of their predecessors of the 1860’s. Armed revolt also had a place among the means advocated to arouse

the nation, but there were also other spheres of activity such as organizational work — as a means but not as an end in itself. The slogans of the „Liga” and especially of its initiator, Miłkowski, did indeed evoke a wide response in the Exile and in Poland itself. The „Liga” was organized on elitist principles and imposed secrecy, on the model of the Order of Masons; it also established „Polish Youth” — ZET — built on the same hierarchical principle. Z. Balicki, a member of the „Liga” and a founder of the „Endecja” instilled these principles into the youth as well.

The inclusive character of the platform of the „Liga” enabled people of different view in Warsaw to join its ranks, and among them Roman Dmowski and Jan Ludwik Popławski, the two other founding fathers of the „Endecja”. The „Liga” members all over Poland numbered no more than some 380 (280 of them in Congress Poland), but they had extensive influence in a variety of cultural, educational, welfare and youth organizations, including the „Endecja”.

At this time (1885) a publication on similar lines began to appear in Warsaw, the weekly „Głos” (The Voice), edited by Popławski. It stood for ideas close to those of the „Liga”. While in exile in Siberia, Popławski had been influenced by the ideas of the Populists (Narodniks), and he began to diffuse them in the Polish nationalist spirit of his paper. In his view, the popular strata (lud) were the most important in the nation, and it was part of the lofty final aims of Polish nationalism to bring these strata within the power centre in the process of national rejuvenation. Popławski’s cult of „the peasant” („the people”) was anti-universalist and anti-socialistic. Later on, a set of younger people formed round the paper, including Dmowski, the third outstanding personality among the „Endecja” leaders and the one that left the deepest impress.

On the initiative of these three, and it would seem mainly of Dmowski, in circumstances still obscure today there was a sort of coup („putsch”) inside the „Liga” in 1893; its centre was transferred to Poland and its name was changed to „Liga Narodowa” (National League). A process began of cultural movement towards extreme nationalism. People who were inclined to democratic radicalism and socialism left its ranks. This „Liga” had pretensions to being an „internal national government” and its ambition was to dominate the entire Polish public. It was this „Liga” that was behind the „Endecja”, directing and guiding it from the time of its formal inception in 1897.

In the beginning, the „Endecja” ideology was largely eclectic, comprising diverse elements, but with regard to the Jews a large part of what was to be its mainstay was already there.

In all the years it existed, the „Endecja” never tired of drawing attention to the originality of its nationalist doctrine. In the 1930’s Dmowski wrote: „The adherents of the national camp did not copy any political organization of other countries. Its ideas were not merchandise imported from abroad. They were the outcome of a prolonged, independent Polish intellectual effort, the proud expression in its impelling power of the tie to the homeland”. (*Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 138—9). The movement was also proud that thanks to its activity, the public recognized that the people constituted a value superior to class with its artificial international solidarity. Behind these formulas lay hidden a wholesale nationalism, denying any cooperation with people of other nations and defining itself in social-Darwinist terms. It was for good reason that the „Endecja” boasted of the fact that thanks to it the term „chauvinism” had stopped having a depreciatory meaning in Poland. Nevertheless, a critical scrutiny of these ideas proves that they were not really distinguished by excessive originality and that most of them if not all were adopted from the European — mostly German and French — school of nationalist thought, with hardly any modification.

Another affirmation heard among „Endecja” adherents was that they and not their rivals (with their cosmopolitan, liberal, democratic notions) were the real representatives of the *Zeitgeist* and of the future as well, since nationalism was the *idee-force* that was conquering the world. The „Endecja” publicists, Dmowski at their head, prophesied that their rivals would soon disappear from the scene despite the massive support of the people behind them, the Freemasons and the Jews.

Dmowski’s belief in the future conquest of nationalism was reinforced by a visit he made to Japan in 1904 to persuade the rulers there not to support the revolt proposed by Piłsudski, also visiting there with his associates at the time. The Japanese were holding their ground against Russia with striking success, and Dmowski found this not only a proof of the superiority of rising young nationalism but also a confirmation of the Darwinist-social thesis he believed in that war is the supreme test of a people’s ability to overcome in the struggle for survival. He prayed that Poland might copy the Japanese, who were at the highest stage of national development, in his opinion, and thus Poland would be qualified to survive, healthy and flourishing. In Japan the great force of national sentiment became clear to him, forcibly impelling the individual „to obey the collective will of the people... expressed in inherited instincts stronger than any intelligence”. („*Przegląd Wszechpolski*”, 1905, pp. 17—19). „Endecja” perceived „the people” as a deterministic, organic unity which the individuals are totally dependent on and which they cannot detach themselves from, since this would

be going against nature. It is a short step from this to seeing individuals who rebel against this destiny as enfeebled creatures, infected by disintegrative anti-national opinions under the influence of the Freemasons and the Jews. Dmowski equated what happens in human society with what happens in nature. „In society as in nature, a selection takes place governed by the degree of fitness of the different types and races”. This elevation of absolute national aims at once confessed to moral relativism, to representing national egoism as an absolute value in itself, as Balicki dwelt on it in the pamphlet he wrote on this specific theme, *Egoizm narodowy wobec etyki* (National Egoism face to face with Ethics), (Lwów, 1902). Hence the justification of conquest and repression of minorities. Policies like these need not be burdened with „out-of-date humanist phraseology” or hampered by moral considerations. „Endecja’s” opponents had every reason and, in our opinion, justification for seeing this model as a copy of German nationalist ideas of the close of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. The attitude of Dmowski and his followers to the Germans’ policy of conquest and repression of the Poles in the territories they occupied was indeed a mixture of fear and holy awe. Holy awe, since Dmowski attributed the success of Wilhelm II’s Germany precisely to its brutality, absence of moral scruples and lack of consideration for others, and fear because he saw Germany as the greatest threat to Poland in the future. After 1905 he was ready to envisage an alliance with Russia against Germany even at the price of renouncing Polish independence.

It was no accident then that Dmowski praised the type of Poles that were forged under Prussian rule, the merciless cunning with which they fought its anti-Polish measures. His hope was that all the Poles would become like them, with these „biological” qualities that would fit them to overcome in the struggle for individual and national survival.

In our view the outstanding expression of the chauvinist character of „Endecja” nationalism was the affirmation that the wars of the Poles against their subjugators were not fought against governments, as the past fighters for Polish freedom had believed when they distinguished between the freedomloving peoples and their oppressors, the regimes of the conquerors. In the „Endecja’s” view, modern nationalism created identity of interest between people and rulers; accordingly it was not the governments but the peoples — mainly the Germans and to a lesser extent the Russians — who waged wars of extermination against the Poles and who were their enemies. In this social-Darwinist war, there was no room for a distinction between the people and their government.

With Dmowski and Balicki, the term „Polish-ness” indicated an

ideological, racial category. In Dmowski's *Thoughts* and Balicki's *National Egoism*, Polish exclusivity (or exclusive Polish-ness) was set over against all-of-humanity solidarity, the organic unity of the people against liberalism and individual freedom. In other words, the Western ideals were by definition anti-national, and along this line of reasoning „Endecja's” conservatism became increasingly ethocentric. In general the „Endecja”, like other conservative European movements, was totally opposed to the heritage of the „enlightenment” and the French Revolution as a breach of the historic continuity of the development of the people. By increasing polarization between the classes and weakening patriotism, it caused social atomization and the destruction of traditional bonds. France and all of Europe were deflected from the path of natural development. The rationalist ideology in whose name the French Revolution acted destroyed natural-organic values, replacing them by artificial ideas opposed to the laws of life, which draw their sustenance from the past and are based on the cultural and historical uniqueness of each people. Liberal, modern society turned the individual into an alienated being, because it undermined the historical scale of values and hierarchic stability, replacing them by individualistic egoism, contempt for the past and hostility to nationalism.

This criticism of modern society with the Jew as its main symbol placed the „Endecja” firmly in the anti-revolutionary, conservative trend that spread increasingly throughout the whole of Europe from the time of the Napoleonic Wars at the beginning of the 19th century onwards.

The anti-Jewish aspect in the „Endecja” ideology

As we have already stated, the hostile attitude towards the Jews was a characteristic feature of the „Endecja” from its inception, since a large part of its activity was directed against the conciliatory positivism which led among other things to Jews' fitting into Polish society. The attitude to the Jews was unfavourable in any case, and indeed the term „positivism” itself was not infrequently said to be a Jewish invention. The anti-Jewish charges made by the „Endecja” were given a warm welcome by urban and rural strata imbued with a deep-rooted anti-Jewish animosity, strata which the „Endecja” sought to turn into an active, central part of the process of all-Polish national crystallization. The „Endecja” and Dmowski in the first place considered the economic anti-Jewish „struggle” as representing the activation and auto-emancipation of these strata. but it was more than this. Hostility to the Jews was not only a tactical, educational tool for the nationalist activation of the

masses, as some researchers would have it (v. Oberlander, *Jewish Monthly*, 1932), but an organic and not inconsiderable part of the entire „Endecja” nationalist doctrine. The use of anti-Jewish stereotypes and symbols was an important ingredient in the doctrine, although in the period dealt with here it had not yet seized the important place it held in later years.

The Jewish question was not even mentioned in the Party programme of 1897 addressed to Congress Poland. Only a year later, however, in discussing the nature of „Endecja” nationalism, Balicki ruled out armed uprising, rejected the radical democratic ideals of the 1863 revolt and framed a thesis on „inner strengthening” as the alternative to rebellion. He posited among the pre-conditions for achieving independence that the Poles must take over as many sectors of social life as possible from the Jews, who dominated commerce and industry.

Popławski’s aggressive anti-Jewish stand was also linked to criticism of what he called the folly of cosmopolitan liberalism, personified by the Jew.

There was a particularly stiff opposition to Zionism, not so much because of the „Palestine” programme but from „Endecja’s” angle of „working in the present” to create national territorial autonomy. It was denied, as a matter of principle in the spirit of German and French anti-Semitism, that the Jews were a people. In Dmowski’s eyes they were just a tribe or a religious sect, foreign to the mentality of the Polish people. (P.W.” 1902.) He did not deny the possibility of Jewish assimilation in principle, but said that this referred only to a limited number of Jews who would be ready to relinquish their past entirely in return for being allowed to „fit in.” In the publication he edited, however, intended for workers and peasants, he used extreme and violent language in attacking continued „Jewish exploitation.” Dmowski’s influence was decisive in radicalizing of the anti-Jewish process in the „Endecja” (as in other things too). Researchers assume that he was an anti-Semite from his young days under the influence of home, school and environment; even if this is not necessarily entirely correct, he did display enmity to Jewry in his first in the University, at a very early stage of his public activity. This anti-semitism of his, however, was not yet obsessional and eschatological in character. Redemption for the Polish nation and for the world at large was not yet made conditional on a solution of the Jewish problem. By the time of the 1905 revolution, his increasing radicalization was indeed perceptible and he constantly became more and more extreme till his last day. His, so to say, relatively moderate view in the period under discussion can be traced to a number of factors:—

1) This was the first stage in crystallizing his ideology, and it comprised

a number of elements including the still amorphous anti-Jewish one. The main themes of anti-Semitism were already there, however, in outline.

2) The „Endecja” camp was heterogeneous in its social composition and some of the people in its ranks took a more moderate line regarding the Jews.

3) Dmowski's place as the one and only charismatic leader who had subjugated one and all was not yet secure.

4) Tactical reasons for restraint sprang from the political situation, especially in Galicia.

We have already referred to Dmowski's *Thoughts*, the series of articles he published in 1902, *Myśli Nowoczesnego Polaka* (Thoughts of a Modern Pole). These articles were re-published in 1903 as a separate pamphlet and it went through seven reprints; his followers called it the catechism of Polish nationalism, a sort of sacred 'credo.' In this pamphlet he presented *inter alia* his views on the Jews. His reflections on the Jewish questions were an inseparable part of his entire nationalist outlook, which was a medley of romanticism, social-Darwinist philosophy and racial beliefs. At the centre was the decisive importance for the nation's coming into being of historical, traditional instincts and common origins. Although Dmowski did not precisely define the nature of these instincts, it is clear that in his view they shape the specific, unique nature of the nation. Their roots are in the pre-political, ancient past and are deterministic in character, which means that no single individual is free to shake off belonging to his people, but also that fitting in a foreign element, the Jew, into Polish society is problematic on principle. Unlike other peoples of weak national awareness living in Poland, the Jews were not passive material like the Ukrainians or Bielorrussians; they had generations of self-formation behind them, and the young Polish people was not capable of absorbing and assimilating them. The way to fit them in was to take in only a few Jews, „those closest to us and most like us” (*Thoughts*, p. 91). To attempt to assimilate great numbers of them might end in the Poles' being swallowed up among the Jews.

Furthermore, the racial characteristics of the Jewish people were foreign and therefore harmful to the Polish people. What were these characteristics that threatened the mental and spiritual integrity of the Polish people? In Manichean, nationalist vein, Dmowski (and together with him his pupils and associates) presents the nature of the Jews as the absolute antithesis of nationality. They are cosmopolites who disintegrate Polish society. They have a specially notable, dangerous effect on the intelligentsia, introducing Socialist ideas that place foreign, abstract ideas above the real interests of the Polish nation. Dmowski deliberately lumped together socialist groups indifferent or hostile to nationalism and

socialist-nationalists like the PPS, because the „Endecja” wanted to call into question the credibility of the Polish Socialist Party’s nationalism, saying it was purely „formal” and a pretext for instilling anti-national sentiments in the people.

Though the PPS adopted nationalist phraseology, contended Poplawski, „the Polish soul and the natural national instincts are not to be found in its activity... Their patriotism is forced, the fruit of theoretical assumptions... at the best an intellectual structure, but the voice of Polish blood is not to be heard there declaring its racial and spiritual uniqueness.” This absence of ancient, tribal, irrational elements — in the Endecja’s” view the important characteristic traits of national origin — was charged to the Jews in the PPS, incapable of identifying themselves with the aspirations and unique nature of the Polish people. Some polemist went so far as to argue that radical and democratic liberalism, with its eschatological implications, and first and foremost socialism were invented by the Jews to serve their racial interests. Through these ideas of theirs, the Jews were working to get the peoples to revolt against „the Aryan peoples’ organizing”. Every Pole who joined the socialist ranks was nothing but a pseudo-Pole or else of non-Polish origin. The implication here was that even the offspring of converts, even if entirely assimilated, were not free of their racial heritage. („P.W.” 1903. Review of Piłsudski’s Autobiography.)

The conclusion that imposed itself was that the Jew could not be a true Polish patriot. „Even the best, most assimilated Jews do not think and feel nationally. National policy is foreign to them, so in the best case they are indifferent and in general hostile to it. Thus our sole task in their regard is to fight against them with all possible means.” („P.W.” 1901.)

The destructive influence of the Jews did not date from modern times — its roots were in the distant past, when they allied themselves with the nobility and prevented the emergence of an authentic Polish urban class, which could have threatened the power of the szlachta (nobility) and turned Poland into a modern State.” (*Thoughts*, pp. 39—40.) The Jews succeeded in advancing their own particularist, egoistic interests because of „the Polish people’s passivity and its soft humanism, which enabled the Jews to turn the country into a paradise for themselves. Instead of being grateful, they took control of the economy and perpetuated its political backwardness.” There was more than a hint here that it was really the Jews who were to blame for Poland’s loss of its independence, though Polish „tolerance and humanity” were no less guilty. Was it not an important aim of the „Endecja” to root out these „weaknesses”? Hence the great weight that the „Endecja” attached to the econo-

mic anti-Jewish „struggle”, both because of its economic importance but also, and mainly, as part of the re-education process in the spirit of nationalist ideas. In supporting and afterwards organizing the anti-Jewish boycott, harassing the Jews and pushing them out of their strongholds in the Polish economy, the Endecja appeared to embody the interests of the Polish middle class.

In the political sphere, as well, the Jewish danger lay in wait for the Poles, mainly from the „Litvak” Jews and the Zionists, accused of promoting the Russification of Poland. In general the „Endecja” heads believed that the Jews in Poland were (in the course of moving away from Polish national aspirations) and getting closer to the occupying Powers and in particular the Russians; from the earliest times the Jews always behaved according to the rule of attaching themselves to the stronger side. Energetic action must be taken therefore to reduce their numbers and prize them off every possible foothold.

It seems to us that in the case of Dmowski and Popławski a settled viewpoint on the Jewish question was already reached by the beginning of the century, one that could be called post-assimilationist, in the sense that they completely barred the idea of even some Jews’ fitting into Polish society. In their view the nature of the Jewish collectivity (which was determinist in character) was in essence disintegrating and anti-national. The most that could be expected of the Jews was neutralization and that too on condition that the Poles become and remain strong.

In 1903, the „Endecja” called on the Polish public in Galicia to support its political platform, part of which was devoted to the Jewish question. It characterized the Jews as an „extra-territorial” group which the Party „does not recognize as a people”, whence followed a declaration of war on any Jewish political, national organizing, and in particular against Zionist activity. As regards assimilation, the choice was left in the hands of the Jews themselves. The implied recognition of this possibility ran counter to the views of Dmowski and company that we have already reviewed but the apparent support for assimilation was illusory, a concession made on tactical grounds only, as we shall see. Whatever the Jews choose to do, the Party demanded that they accept the principle of full, unqualified identification with „Polish national interests” (ibid.), even if this called for some kind of denial of their collective specificity. The platform distinguished three possible Jewish attitudes towards Polish national questions:

- (a) Support for the policy of the ruling Power, identification with its language and culture. The „Endecja” proclaims that it will act mercilessly in the fight against those adopting this attitude and will work to eliminate them from all the positions they hold in society.
- (b) A neutral attitude towards the Polish national struggle. The Party

will afford them a limited tolerance and will focus on removing them from their economic strongholds by Polish efforts.

(c) As for the isolated individuals who adjust themselves to Polish culture, „who identify themselves completely with the national aspirations of our people and share them even if this calls for a limitation of the social status of the Jewish element among us, the Party sees them as full Poles, the equals in rights and duties of all the other sons of our people”. So the Jews who wanted to fit into the society around them were thus called on to identify themselves explicitly with the anti-Semitic policy of the „Endecja”, in whose eyes the positive fact of assimilation was not enough. Political rivals who disagreed with its opinions were not good Poles — the only good Poles were those who identified themselves completely with its nationalist views.

At first sight, his programme was fairly moderate, since the criterion for belonging to the Polish people was not genetic racial but rational and voluntary, the outcome of free acceptance by the individual. The question presents itself whether this programme expressed different shades of opinion that still existed in the „Endecja” camp regarding the Jewish question, or whether it was a matter of local, tactical considerations in Galicia. I incline to the latter view, although various shades of opinion did exist, and it seems to me that the proof is as follows. In 1902 the „Endecja” took control of the most widely-read newspaper in central Galicia, „Słowo Polskie”, which had some 10 to 15.000 subscribers, most of them Jews; two editions appeared daily, morning and afternoon. The paper was edited by an „Endecja” veteran, Zygmunt Wasilewski. The readers of this paper in the period under review would be aware that it strenuously rejected accusations of anti-Semitism. It published articles written by assimilated Jews and voiced its full support for these Jews. It made much of the speeches of „Endecja” candidates for various positions who proclaimed their understanding of specific Jewish issues. The paper even supported Jewish candidates in elections to various institutions, by previous agreement with the heads of the Lwow Kahal. Nevertheless, in the same period the paper wrote that Jewish finance had brought about the outbreak of the Boer War so as to take over the Transvaal gold mines; moreover, the internal „Endecja” press, which did not have to cater to Jewish readers or take account of electoral considerations, kept up anti-Semitic agitation. This undermines the credibility of the paper’s protestations and strengthens the conclusion that the 1903 programme references to the Jews were made for immediate political purposes and were not a statement of considered policy. Increasingly radicalized anti-Semitism in 1904 and 1905, of which we have already seen earlier signs, gives support to this view.

The growing strength of Zionism among the Jews in Poland evoked an angry reaction in the „Endecja” camp. Zionism reinforced Jewish separatist national sentiment, which surfaced in the arena of the campaign for national-cultural autonomy in the Exile. It was not emigration to Palestine that worried the Endecja, but fear lest the minorities form pacts with each other for national autonomy, for this would endanger Polish national hegemony, especially in eastern Galicia, where the Jews held the balance between the Poles and the Ukrainians. In a keynote article defining the main issues, *Pochodzenie i Istota Syjonizmu* (The Origin and Essence of Zionism), Popławski wrote (*Political works*, Vol: 1pp. 245—263) that Zionism was not only a response to anti-Semitism, as some Jewish assimilationists claimed, but expressed „the racial instinct calling for closer ties with the Jewish masses.” He evaluated this phenomenon according to the „Endecja” criteria of national „organisms” and concluded that the growth of Zionism was nothing other than an expression of the bankruptcy of assimilationist theory. It met the needs of the moment, in face of internal developments in Jewish society, where a considerable stratum of the Jewish intelligentsia had indeed adopted the external signs Polish culture, but remained in heart and soul bound by innumerable ties to the Jewish masses. In the vein of anti-Semitism and more especially German contentions, Popławski contended that this stratum on the one hand preserved its unfavourable Jewish traits and on the other lost the few favourable traits of the traditional Jew. This stratum brought its unfavourable Jewish qualities with it into Polish society and anti-Semitism was simply a reaction to this concentrated penetration (this, too was an anti-Semitic contention widely heard in Europe). It may appear as if Popławski evaluated Polish and Jewish nationalism in equal terms as expressing popular national awakening and democratization, but the resemblance is deceptive. Relying on Renan and others he drew a distinction between normal, healthy Polish nationalism and Jewish distorted nationalism, since the Jews were not and never had been, a people as a biological entity in line with the thinking of 18th century rationalists, he defined the Jews as sect of religious fanatics and denied the principle itself of their originality and religious cultural contribution. Thus Zionism was nothing but a moderate reflection of Jewish sectorian fanaticism.

As we have said, the danger for Endecja in Popławski’s view lay not in the unrealistic aspiration to transfer the Jews to Palestine but in the reinforcement of their fanatical, sectarian organization in the Exile, an organization unavoidably hostile to the Poles and an ally of all Poland’s enemies. The Jew represented „principles contrary to the original Polish spirit” and it was therefore imperative to weaken Zionism even at the

price of increased assimilation. He did not detail still more radical solutions, which Dmowski inclined to.

THE FREEMASONS

In the xenophobic mythology of the „Endecja”, the myth of the Masonic conspiracy played a considerable role, at first on its own and afterwards connected with the Jews. In 1933, in the preface to the 4th edition of his *Thoughts*, Dmowski wrote that after the appearance of the first edition he had been attacked from various and opposite sides and had come to the conclusion that there was a powerful conspiratorial organization working to achieve its secret aims, and that it was this organization that had organized the attack on him and on the Endecja. From then on, at the age of 40, he began to interest himself in the Masons; his eyes opened and he understood many political and social phenomena whose meaning had been hidden from him. Thence forward the theme of the Masonic plot — later the Jewish-Masonic plot — became an obsession. It succeeded in taking root in his movement and among large sections of the public. Any opposition to his views and to „Endecja” policy Poland’s setbacks and the troubles of the entire Christian world were all blamed on the Freemasons. Masonry was pictured as the chief enemy of the national idea and the first begetter of anti-religious, cosmopolite radicalism. Abstract universalism, which in Dmowski’s view went contrary to scientific evolutionary teachings, would have collapsed without the Freemasons. The Japanese victory over Russia, however, confirmed him in his belief that the national idea must conquer and would overthrow the Freemasons despite their Jewish backing. The more radical the nationalism and anti-Semitism in the „Endecja” camp, the stronger grew the hold of the Jewish-Masonic conspiracy myth. To this was added a motif that was part of overall anti-Semitism — fear of the supposedly limitless destructive power of the Jews. Saving the world from the Jews becomes a necessary condition for removing all the sufferings and sorrow of troubled humanity.

To sum up, in the 1920s Dmowski in retrospect prided himself on the fact that by virtue of his fight against universalist ideas, the „Endecja” camp had successfully prevented Poland from falling victim to the fate of the West, „ruled by secret organizations under the decisive influence of national unity, but this was denied them in Poland thanks to the Endecja, finance Jewry”. There the Jews had succeeded in disintegrating organic so Poland became the prime target of Masonic intrigues (*Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 237—49).

The paranoid theory of these intrigues is to be found in the novel that appeared in 1934, *Dziedzictwo* (The Inheritance).

RELIGION AND ENDECJA ANTI-SEMITISM

As we know, Dmowski was a positivist by training and belief, at least in the period under review. Nonetheless, as early as 1903 he recognized Catholicism as Poland's national religion and the Catholic Church as a national institution („P.W.” 1903) and accordingly affirmed the Endecja camp's fidelity to them. He was also interested in having priests join the movement or at least cooperate with it. He therefore called on Endecja to combat moves against the Church, whether from outside or inside. By moves from the inside he meant that socialism had taken its anti-religious stand under the influence of „the enmity towards the Church and the Catholic public nursed by the Jews”.

The Endecja also made use of the profound religious feeling of the peasants so as to increase its influence in the villages. The Church was at first suspicious of the advances made by the „Endecja” because the Darwinist and racial elements in the Endecja ideology ran counter to Catholic doctrine and ethics, and also because the Endecja criticised the anti-national policy of the higher ranks in the Church hierarchy. Later on, however, the Church's attitude changed, partly because the „Endecja” was ready to somewhat moderate the positivist-Darwinist aspects of its propaganda. Dmowski viewed the Church as the sole force that had not surrendered to the Jews and the Freemasons, and as an important ally in the fight to get the Jews out of their positions in Polish society. All the same, the „Endecja” cannot be regarded as a Catholic Party despite its watchword, „Polish-Catholic”, both because it was not under clerical control and because it had non-believers among its members. As early as the 1897 programme, however, the „Endecja” declared that it considered it part of its mission to conduct „a policy of energetic defence of the rights and interests of the Catholic religion and Church” (ibid.).

Researches have sought to trace the sources of this attitude to Catholicism. Dmowski himself for most of his life was not a believing, observant Catholic. His close friend, Ignacy Chrzanowski, one of the greatest authorities on Polish literature and a pious Catholic, even protested at Dmowski's insincerity in stressing the importance of religion in his programme though he himself was not religious. It can be said that it was not metaphysics, ethics or religion that decided Dmowski's attitude to the Church but historical, cultural and national aspects as well as pragmatic, political consideration. His reverence for the Church sprang from his seeing

it as heir to the Latin culture at the core of law and civilization and which in his view had formed the character of Europe and within it of Poland too. Roman civilization had accorded Europe stability, taught respect for law and laid the foundations of enlightened European culture, with State law, private and public, at its centre. For Dmowski, religion was an educational, cultural instrument for endowing the State with stability and accustoming the citizen to obey law and respect order. This ideal of his was not much different from that of Prussia — *Ordnung*. In his view, Latin order and stability served as a defensive wall against Eastern, Byzantine anarchy.

The juristic aspect and the hierarchic structure of the Catholic Church were what attracted him and what in his opinion had formed Poland as a Western country. It followed that the Jews — an Eastern element — were simply not capable of fitting into European society, and to bring them in would mean disintegration.

Despite „Endecja's” affirmation of fidelity to Catholicism and its principles, Dmowski's nationalist conception, with its biological-racial elements and the nation as a closed entity impenetrable to outsiders, was the opposite of the universalist principles of the Catholic faith, open to every believer. A wide gulf divided the Christian doctrine of mercy and grace from the call for a pitiless, expansionist war of survival. Dmowski sought to overcome these contradictions by distinguishing between individual and national morality. The individual in private life behaved or should behave according to Christian moral precepts, for Christianity was a religion of individuals; it was born in an environment devoid of nationality, had found individuals bereft of national ties, wandering isolated and astray in alien paths of life, and offered them salvation. Christian principles did not hold good for relations between peoples or between individuals and their nation. National ethics „can only be understood by people belonging to the nation and firmly attached to it” — that is, not by Jews and cosmopolites. Dmowski found the loftiest embodiment of this ethics in Japan, where the tie between the individual and the people is much deeper than in Europe.

What is the content of this „ethics”? — absolute coercion of the will of the individual in the interest of the whole, without any possibility of choice as regards belonging to the whole or leaving it. The ties of the individual to the whole are deterministic instincts „stronger than logic and which at times even overcome the instincts of self-preservation.” („P.W.” 1905) This conception invalidates the Western pluralistic principle of individual choice. By drawing this distinction, the „Endecja” sought to bridge the gulf between its outlook and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

It is doubtful whether Dmowski's casuistry succeeded in convincing anyone, and it is not our business to decide whether his reconciliation of contradictions is theologically admissible, but there is no doubt that a close alliance was forged between the „Endecja” and the Church — at least with regard to the Jews. Not a few among the clergy were „Endecja” activists and many more were among its adherents, active and passive.

SUMMING UP

With „Endecja's” constantly growing hostility to the Jews, the mythology enveloping the question went on expanding. As early as the 1905 revolution and in its wake, the Jews were presented as Poland's most dangerous enemies. A writer signing himself 'Topor' affirmed in an article, „Everywhere and in all periods the Jews have constituted the dissolvent elements among the Christian peoples, perhaps because they themselves constitute a very strong, united religio-social organization („P.W.” 1905, p. 89.). It is not surprising, therefore, that there was increasing opposition in the „Endecja” ranks to the grant of equal rights to Jews in the municipalities when the issue was raised in the Duma. From about 1910 any reference to the Jewish problem automatically brought in the world Jewish conspiracy. The election campaign for the fourth Duma in 1912 was so aggressively anti-Semitic that even some Endecja supporters voiced reservations. The defeat of Dmowski in these elections exacerbated the movement's anti-Semitism, which in the end became the central component of the whole ideology of the nationalist camp. The motif of the Jewish-Freemason conspiracy accompanied the life of the Jewish public with increasing virulence and insistence right up to the outbreak of the Second World War.

It would appear that the „Endecja's” success in propagating anti-Semitism also had its share in the fate that befell the Jews in Poland in the Holocaust.

Israel Oppenheim

Endecja i jej stosunek do kwestii żydowskiej (1895–1905)

W kręgach endeckich antysemityzm od zarania dziejów był zjawiskiem powszechnym, a od początku XX w. znacznie się nasilił. Narastający konflikt polsko-żydowski w dużym stopniu miał podłoże ekonomiczne. W pismach ideologów i teoretyków Narodowej Demokracji (np. Balickiego) niejednokrotnie wprost nawoływano do przejmowania sektorów gospodarki zdominowanej przez Żydów, co miało być przygotowaniem do odbudowy niepodległego państwa polskiego.

Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka Romana Dmowskiego (1902) stały się swego rodzaju katechizmem polskiego nacjonalizmu, co w konsekwencji wpłynęło na spotęgowanie antysemityzmu w kręgach endeckich.

Dla celów propagandowych bardzo często posługiwano się argumentem odrębności Żydów, ich obcości, kosmopolityzmu i przede wszystkim podatności na idee socjalistyczne. Nierzadko też krytykowano ludność żydowską za współpracę z zaborcami, a w szczególności z Rosjanami (Litwacy, syjoniści).

Szybki rozwój idei syjonistycznych na początku XX w. stał się również powodem wzrostu antysemityzmu endecji w latach 1903–1905. Ogromną rolę w koncepcjach narodowej demokracji odegrał mit o masońsko-żydowskiej konspiracji, co stało się pewnego rodzaju obsesją Dmowskiego.

Przed I wojną światową wzrastała również opozycja endecji przeciwko Żydom w kolejnych Dumach. Po porażce Dmowskiego do IV Dumy (1912) antysemityzm stał się ważnym elementem w ideologii ruchu nacjonalistycznego.