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Early modern Polish nation and the new modern Pole

Borders of Poland

If we take a look at the contemporary political map of Europe, the borders of Poland seem to be „hard", natural division that separates not only different states but also different nations. The town of Kostrzyn on the Polish side of the border river Odra on the Polish-German frontier is inhabited almost exclusively by Poles, while across the river, in Kietz, the great majority of inhabitants are German.

If we went back a hundred years or so, to the break of the twentieth century, and took a look – as the Japanese army strategists had certainly done in preparation to war with the Russian Empire - at the situation in the region it would, at first glance, seem to be quite similar. For, looking at the map, they could see a political entity called „Polish Kingdom", and if the data on its ethnic composition had been available to them the picture would also have been comparable. At the time, the Polish Kingdom was inhabited almost exclusively by ethnic Poles, with the exception of some, mainly urban, Jewish population, and a small Lithuanian minority in the north of the country. At first sight, a reader of the map wouldn't have guessed that the country lacked most of the standard state attributes: it had neither sovereign government, nor its own army, currency, customs, and its official language was foreign. In his book „Rossija i Jewropa. Wgliad na kulturnyje i politiczeskije otnoszenija słowianskogo mira k giermano-ramanskomu" [Russia and Europe. An interpretation of cultural and political relationships between Slavonic and Germano-Roman worlds], a Russian political thinker and analyst, Nikołaj Danilewski, went as far as to suggest that Polish nation served, as it were, a „detention sentence"[1].

Fortunately enough, at least in the context of Polish-Japanese relations, Japanese strategists of the time were more curious than a casual map reader would have been. As early as 1892, Major Fukushima Yasumasa, the military attache in Japanese embassy in Germany, set off on a horse journey from Berlin to Vladivostok (and on his way, he visited the above-mentioned towns of Kietz and Kostrzyn, a site of important Prussian military fortifications that today serve as a tourist attraction). Beside the military and strategic matters, Major Fukushima was also keenly interested in the culture and people of the lands along the route of his journey,

[1] N.Danilewskij, Rossija i Jewropa. *Wgliad na kulturnyje i politiczeskije otnoszenija słowianskogo mira k giermano-ramanskomu*, Petersburg 1895, pp. 30, 33.

including Poles. For instance, he met the Polish gentry family of Bolcewicz from Uciany[2]. The village Uciany (today, Utena in Lithuania) is situated by the road from Warsaw to Petersburg, quite far outside the borders of the former Polish Kingdom and modern Republic of Poland, but close enough to Zułów, the place of birth of Józef Piłsudski, one of the most eminent politicians in the 20th century history of Poland, and, to some extent, a hero of this text.

But why were Japanese military officials so interested in meeting a Polish family of Bolcewicz living in some remote countryside? Of course, the village was situated on the newly-built railway route that was of a strategic importance to Russian Empire. But the acquaintance with the Bolcewicz family and other Poles was also interesting for Major Fukushima, an outstanding Japanese army officer, in that it helped him to gain deeper knowledge of so-called Polish historical culture, or national memory. And then, he must have noticed that for many Poles (though, as we will see later, not all of them) the theoretical borders of „Polish Kingdom" did not match their idea of Poland, Polishness and Polish historical culture, including its geopolitical position. And that was a factor that had its bearing both in purely military and in geopolitical terms (we will return to this matter at the end of this text). And as we know from other sources, Major Fukushima shared his opinion on the reach and viability of Polish culture, as opposed to the Russian one, among others with General Gentaro Kodama, a leading Japanese political and military official of the time[3].

Let's try to characterise the culture in question. It is the culture of the „Commonwealth of Two Nations", a state that existed in modern times in Central and Eastern Europe, in recent literature also called Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, or just Commonwealth. Its territory included today's Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, and – only in part – Poland. Its political and social elite consisted of Polish gentry – a class that was quite numerous and internally very diversified in terms of social and wealth status of its members, who were the bearers of the aforementioned culture. For the purposes of this lecture, we can call them Poles of that time even if their names or ethnic origins might have been other than Polish or even other than Slavonic, as, for instance, is the case with my own name.

It indicates the processes of assimilation and Polonisation of elites of different ethnic origins that had been taking in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance period on the vast territories reigned by Polish kings and Great Dukes of Lithuania from Jagiellon dynasty. We

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[2] Ewa Pałasz Rutkowska, Andrzej T. Romer, Historia stosunków polsko-japońskich 1904-1945, Warszawa: Bellona, 1996, p. 27.

[3] See Dmowski's relation of his dinner with General Kodama, in Mariusz Kułakowski (Józef Zieliński), *Roman Dmowski w świetle listów i wspomnień*, Londyn 1968, s. 285.

can note here that the dynasty lent its name for one of the popular names of the Commonwealth – „Poland of Jagiellons".

The nation of historical Poland – „early modern Polish nation"

This group (which I may call my compatriots) is reffered to by Professor Timothy Snyder from Yale University, in his book „Reconstruction of Nations. Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999", as „early modern Polish nation"[4]. In fact, it is the political nation of „historical Poland" or „Jagiellon Poland". Its culture included the greatest in Europe Jewish community that lived in relatively peaceful symbiosis (also in economical terms) with the „early modern Polish nation". The peasants, speaking many different languages (Polish, German, Ukrainian, Belarussian, Lithuanian, Latvian) formed the majority of the Commonwealth's inhabitants, and the basic underpinning of its culture. They were mainly Christians of various denominations: Roman and Greek Catholic, Orthodox, or Protestant. Their political or national rights, as well as aspirations were very constricted. They had their place in the Commonwealth's culture but their role was rather passive.

At the end of 18th century, when Russia, Prussia, and Austria-Hungary – after three consecutive partitions – managed to divide between themselves the territory of the Commonwealth, its political and social system was already seen by many as outdated. The state ceased to exist but the „early modern Polish nation" outlived the collapse of its political organisation. The same was true about its multidimensional, rich culture that, for so many centuries and in almost every aspect, had integrated the vast lands of the Commonwealth. It would not just dissappear but its internal erosion processes started to become more and more pronounced.

What had the most dreadful effects on the prevalence of the „early modern Polish nation" culture was, quite predictably, the popular education and the gradual improvement of general living standards of the masses, resulting from economical development of the lands of the former Commonwealth. Thus, in the course of 19th century, the „early modern Polish nation", though still viable and active, gradually petrified, lagging behind dynamic social changes taking place in the region (we will return to this topic later) – that mainly consisted in the emergence of modern political nations: Latvian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Belarussian, and – last but not least – Polish. The long-term policy of partition powers – especially Russia and

[4] T. Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations. Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press 2003, pp. 1–3.

Prussia (Germany) – aimed at counteracting the influences of Polish culture also played its part in the process.

A picture, very interesting and based on extensive research, of this petrifying Polish gentry culture, and its relation to (in this case Ukrainian) countryfolk with its emancipating aspirations, and to Russian empire authorities has been recently given by a French scholar, Daniel Beavois, in his monumental work „Trójkąt Ukraiński" [Ukrainian Triangle][5].

Russians and the culture of the former Commonwealth

We have to remember that active Polish presence deep in the East (for instance, Kijev, the present capital of Ukraine, was an important center of Polish culture) and the special role of Polish community as an „elite of non-existing state" remained the main clue to understand Russian attitude towards so-called „Polish cause", and more generally, their view of the situation. That's why the aforementioned Russian political thinker, Danilewski – as well as most of Russian political opinion leaders – thought that Poles had been „taken in custody". For in his opinion, Poles remained a threat to the Russian imperial hold over terrritories that, by both Russians and Poles, were called „borderlands" (Kresy, Okrainy), eastern or western, respectively. A good example of this stance can be found in a text „Współczesny zakres sprawy polskiej" [The present extent of the Polish cause], written by Jurij Samarin in reaction to the Polish uprising of 1863. Samarin, a Slavophil, believed that the reason why Poles posed so many problems for the Russian Empire is, in his words, the „Polonism" taken as a culture or system of beliefs of Polish gentry, originating from them intelligentsia and Catholic clergy – in other words, a culture of the social class that, after Snyder, we called above „early modern Polish nation". For the Russian thinker, the culture proved to be a means of expansion of Catholic and Protestant West (in his opinion, inevitably doomed to ultimate collapse) into the territories (lands inhabited by Orthodox Christians – Belarus, Ukraine) that, in his view, „historically" belonged to Slavonic and Orthodox Russia. The „Polonism" was described by Samarin and other Russian thinkers as a culture of social elites that was alien to the most numerous social class in the Polish Kingdom, ordinary peasants, taken by Samarin as a true Polish nation. At some point of his text, Samarin went as far as to hint that the Polish problem may be resolved by a change of Polish elites – meaning that it may be in the Russian interest to foster a gradual process of evolution that would ultimately result in a transition from „gentry" to „peasant" Polish nation, in a way similar to Czechs or Lithuanians of the time. Ideally, from the

[5] D. Beauvois, *Trójkąt ukraiński. Szlachta carat i lud na Wołyniu, Podolu i Kijowszczyźnie, 1793-1914*, Lublin 2005.

Russian imperial point of view, the process should be controlled by Russian administration, using people who identified themselves with Russian or Slavonic ideals. The evolution would ultimately lead to limiting Polish presence to ethnically Polish lands (i.e. Polish Kingdom, Great Poland, and Western Galicia)[6].

The above described geopolitical considerations formed the conceptual basis for Russian policy of „detention", and, in fact, of expulsion and suppresion of the Polish political nation in the territories of the former Commonwealth, a policy quite ruthlessly pursued by Russian imperial authorities in the last decades of the 19th century. A recent work by a Russian historian, Leonid Gorizontow, „Paradoksy impierskoj politiki. Poliaki w Rossii i Russkije w Polsze"[7], gives a deep and interesting account of the processes.

Dmowski, „Myśli Nowoczesnego Polaka" [Thoughts of a Modern Pole], and definition of Polish identity

But what does the history of my family, and more generally the history of „early modern Polish nation" and its struggles with Russian Empire, have to do with the controversial Polish national hero, Roman Dmowski, whose ideas are the main topic of today's lecture? The answer is that the above introduction provides a necessary background to understand properly the breakthrough caused by the emergence on the Polish political scene of the new national or national-democratic movement.

At this point, let me remind to those unfamiliar with my book „Dmowski, Rosja a kwestia polska" [Dmowski, Russia, and the Polish cause], that the starting point of my research was to look for an answer to the question how it came that the most influential Polish political party (i.e. the national movement) took a very controversial decision to support Russia and its allies during the World War I – the Russsia which, to this day, is seen as a main problem in Polish foreign relations and which, in the 19th century, was perceived as the forefront enemy of Poland and the main obstacle in its struggles for „territorial integrity", „equality" and „independence". In my opinion, the clue to answer this question is the fact that the national movement developed in opposition to (or at least in argument with, and aiming at its far-reaching redefinition) traditional „Polish politics" characteristic of the former Commonwealth, that resulted from its political and historical culture, and – most importantly in the context of today's lecture – from its geographical reach. The new political movement (following a group of young politicians and ideologists) simply gave a new meaning to

[6] [Aleksandr] M. Pypin, *Kwestia polska w literaturze rosyjskiej*, Warszawa 1881, pp. 21-23, 43-45, 76-86.
[7] L. Gorizontow, *Paradoksy impierskoj politiki. Poliaki w Rossii i Russkije w Polsze*, Moskwa 1999.

„Poland" and „independence" – the two basic words in a dictionary of every politically and nationally aware inhabitant of the land by the Vistula river around 1900 who thought of himself or herself as a Pole.

In today's lecture I would like to focus on the above aspects which, in my view, are the salient features of Polish national movement ideology, though quite often, especially in works by historians of ideas or historical journalists, they seem to be forgotten and give way to many other, perhaps more popular themes. Here, on the one hand, we have discussions of a few most popular works of Dmowski by, for example, Adam Michnik, or more recently Marcin Król, who, anachronically enough, seem to look at the national movement ideas from the point of view of the Polish intellectual of the end of 20th and the beginning of 21st century, with all his or hers experiences and phobias[8]. These are relatively easy to refute. But on the other hand, we have serious historical works, based on extensive research and, mainly English-language, historical literature, that to some extent reveal the same bias. Their authors tend to focus on these themes in the Polish national movement ideology, or in the works of its most prominent adherents, that have some currency and appeal in the present academic debate. Thus, they are interested in their views on such „topical" issues as racism, antisemitism, nationalism, globalism, modernism, socialism, liberalism, or even „civil society and its enemies".

There is nothing wrong with such a perspective, which sometimes brings results that are quite interesting, but for me, it is too ahistorical. Let me remind you that in 1904 there was no independent Polish state, since Galicia, de facto autonomically governed by Poles, could not be seen as such. And at the time, the most important task for Poles was to make Poland reappear not only on the Japanese military map, but also in reality, even if for contemporary Western analysts, and their Polish followers, the Polish cause was only a minor issue of a minor, peripheral nation, when seen from the perspective of the fate of the whole Western European civilisation.

Unfortunately, I'm not so broad-mineded, contenting myself with much narrower perspective, so my main interest was to explore these (in my view essential) aspects of the history of Polish national movement that related to its constant attempts to further the so-called Polish cause, this notorious „ghost of European diplomacy of the 19th century". As I mentioned earlier, I agree that different accounts of the movement and its leader are perfectly possible, as

[8] A. Michnik, *Rozmowa w cytadeli*, [w:] tegoż, *Ugoda, praca organiczna, myśl zaprzeczna*, Warszawa 1983 r., s. 104, 111, 122; M. Król, *Myśli nienowoczesnego Polaka*, "Gazeta Wyborcza", r. 1999, nr 49, s. 22-23,25.

for example, is the case in the comprehensive work of my younger collegue, dr Grzegorz Krzywiec.[9] I do not suggest that geopolitical considerations are the only interesting theme in the thought and politics of the new movement, and that all other topics are unimportant or not worth analysing.

What I want to say is that we should clearly differentiate between more and less important aspects of the national movement ideology, conceding that for its members the „Polish cause" was the most fundamental issue, at least till the end of military and diplomatic struggles to shape the new borders of the Polish state in 1918-1922. As is obvious for those that are familiar with his work, on this issue I deeply disagree with my younger collegue, who seems to suggest that for the national movement, or at least for its leader, Roman Dmowski, the main obstacle on the way to realise his political ideas were various problems connected with the Jewish minority in Poland, rather than the three partition powers themselves.[10]

But on one issue we can easily agree with dr Krzywiec, namely that Dmowski and his followers, from the very beginning of their political career, showed an exceptional consistency and constancy in their basic ideological and political views. Of course, there were some minor corrections, resulting from political tactics or gradual intellectual development, but the main ideas remained practically unchanged.

That's why first we can go back in time, to the 1880s and 1890s, when the new political and ideological movement emerged and found its place on the Polish political scene. From the very beginning, its ambitions were so far-reaching that its ideology can be safely referred to as a new conception of Polish historical culture. To borrow the phrase from a later, famous book of Roman Dmowski, the movement can be called „modern Poles". Its adherents (first, in their manifestos published mainly in the periodical „Głos" [The Voice]) believed that it made no sense to defend the traditional model of Polish culture, criticised from so many quarters. In their view, the Russians, seen so far as the main enemy of Poland, might have been right in maintaining that the stateless Polish nation consisted of two separate social layers, gentry and peasantry, which – at a closer look – might even be regarded as two separate different nations. The „old" gentry nation was doomed to collapse under the pressure of dynamic processes of democratisation and emergence of national identities that took place in this part of Europe, thorough modernisation that already started in the lands by the river Vistula, and purposeful policy pursued by partition powers, especially Russia and Prussia. The dreadful defeat of the

[9] G. Krzywiec, Roman Dmowski i środowisko radykalnej inteligencji przełomu wieków (1886-1905), Warszawa 2005 (a manuscript of doctoral thesis written under direction of dr hab. Maciej Janowski)

[10] G. Krzywiec, *op.cit*, pp. 17, 400, 443-444.

recent Polish uprising against Russia in 1863-1864 was only a confirmation of this predicament. The other Polish nation was the „people" or Polish peasantry (working class) which at the time lacked full political awarness, but had a real „national-democratic" potential that could become a basis for revival, though in a new form, of the so-called Polish cause, and for reconstruction of the Polish state. In this conception, after the final collapse of the idea of the former Commonwealth, at the end of the 19th century a „new Poland" began to take shape, so far without full national awareness, and in fact – though nobody wanted to be explicit on this matter – limited to ethnicly Polish lands. The process would mean a total redefinition of almost every important aspect of the so-called Polish cause. And in geographical terms, it would mean a reversal from the „Eastern astray routes" towards a sound „Piast" direction, as put by Jan Ludwik Popławski, the leading ideologist of the movement, in one of his manifestos[11].

As you certainly know, the Piast dynasty had reigned in Poland from the 10th to 14th century, on the territory inhabited then as well as now and in the 19th century mainly by people that can be described as ethnic Poles.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the ideological dispute between „modern Poles" and „traditional" ones started to become more heated. In purely political terms, it meant more and more active presence of the Democratic-National Party [Stronnictwo Demokratyczno-Narodowe] in different parts of diveded Poland, including – quite suprisingly – the territories ethnically non-Polish or with mixed ethnical composition, or even outside the Commonwealth borders of 1772 (before the first partition of Poland). Which, of course, slightly blurs the clear and simplified picture of their policy towards eastern bordelands. But let's not dwell upon this issue, as well as upon another one, so often highligted by many historians, namely of the national movement's „new patriotism", readily called „nationalism", which – according to its members – was to unite individuals with the nation as a whole (seen as a kind of „living social organism") in pursuance of common interests.

Two texts, widely discussed and many times re-edited, played especially significant role in this debate: "Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka" [Thoughts of a Modern Pole] by Roman Dmowski, and „Egoizm narodowy w świetle etyki" [Ethical Aspects of National Egoism] by Zygmunt Balicki, another outstanding activist of the new movement. For me, the most important question, both in the above texts and in other public statements of the national movement members of the time,

[11] J.L. Popławski, *Środki obrony [1887]*, [w:] *Pisma polityczne*, t. 2, p. 15.

concerned the ways to achieve their fundamental goal, namely the independent Poland. Though the answers they gave were rarely clear and simple.

One of the clearest explications of the new, as opposed to the more traditional, way leading to that distant goal can be found in an anonymous article, presumably written by Dmowski himself, published in 1901 in „Przegląd Wszechpolski" [All-Polish Review], the main periodical of the national movement. The author wrote: „the other [i.e. the old-fashioned patriots – W.B.] were closer to our political and state tradition, but we are closer to the core, inborn elements of national existence". Then, he presented detailed ideological and political program: we must (...) use the simplest criterion, of seperate national awarness with all its implications, calling it reason of state or national interest, and then proceed to reassessment of all political values, all beliefs, formulae, practical receommendations, all manifestations and problems of our lives"[12]. But, as also indicated by dr Krzywiec, a similar distinction between the „old" and „modern" Poles is present in Dmowski's thought even much earlier – we can trace it in his text from 1890.[13].

What would that mean in practice? It meant, as I already mentioned, a radical change in the very definition of Polish identity. „Old-fashioned patriotism", quite rightly wrote Dmowski in a section of his book „Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka", „is keen to secure that all the inhabitants of the former Commonwealth were interested in its revival". „All" means not only ethnic Poles, but also other nationals of the former Commonwealth: Ukrainians, Belarussians, Lithuanians, and – last but not least – Jews. „New national activists", Dmowski replied, „believe that this way of thinking would prevent us from achieving national independence, [for] (...) Polish state will for the most part be created by Polish nation, comprising native Poles (...) when it becomes powerful enough both within and without, and then (...) it can gain by concessions all those whom it will need"[14].

Indeed, Dmowski in his thought retained all the main features of his new idea of Polish identity that were already present in his statements from 1890s, sometimes only slightly shifting emphasis or highlighting additional themes. He wrote that „the layers of the nation that for centuries had been neglected (...) start to create a new social power that becomes a basis for new political aspirations. This process will transform the soul of the whole nation"[15].

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[12] [R. Dmowski?], *Przeszacowanie wartości politycznych*, „Przegląd Wszechpolski", r. 7, 1901, no 10, p. 584.
[13] G. Krzywiec, op.cit, p. 188.
[14] R. Dmowski, *Myśli*, pp. 164-165.
[15] R. Dmowski, *Myśli*, p. 15.

And then, he continued in more explicit way: „it is not a revival of the old Poland, but rather the birth of a new Poland from deep and forlorn over centuries layers of the nation"[16].

In the same paper, Dmowski intentionally and very pointedly referred to Polish gentry, their historical culture and political influence. At the time, they were seen by Dmowski as his main opponent, or rather principal obstacle to realising the ideals of „modern Pole". Today, these anti-gentry motives of his book are generally either ignored or taken at their face value, which I suppoose is because in modern Poland, the „gentry problem", in its narrow social dimension, is seen as outdated, or even „resolved" – just as the problem of Polish independence also seems to be resolved.

However, when Dmowski presented his opinions, Polish gentry was the aim of his critical remarks mostly as a supporter of ideas and values of traditional sense of Polish identity, as a heir of „early modern Polish nation" (which, in part, evolved into post-gentry „intelligentsia"), rather than as a social class, still influential and powerful, that opressed idealised peasants and formed the basis for government (essentially hostile to national movement and other popular activists) in the only partition zone of Poland that, at the time, was self-governed by Poles, namely Austro-Hungarian Galicia. The whole chapter of his book, the one on national charateristics of Poles, is in fact a statement, though again not necessarily explicit one, of this critique[17]. Here, it's worth noting that dr Krzywiec in his work seems to substantiate this interpretation, in his analysis of Dmowski's texts from the very beginning of his political career where he discussed novels by Henryk Sienkiewicz and Eliza Orzeszkowa[18]. In particular, dr Krzywiec is interested in Dmowski's critical remarks on the unique, traditional and paternalistic relationships between Polish gentry (and intelligentsia) and the Jewish minority, quite numerous in Poland of the time. Though in my opinion, my dear collegue overestimates the importance of this particular topic in Dmowski's thought which was of secondary relevance, at least before 1905.

The same book by Dmowski also contains an interesting discussion of the issue of Polish „borderlands" (defined as „lands with non-Polish core population"). At first glance, it may seem that Dmowski departs here from aforementioned conception of the need to come home from the „Jagiellon astray routes". But here, and not without reason, the idea of Polish borderlands features in the context of the problem of „colonies" that caused so much excitement in 19th century Europe. Dmowski drew some analogy between Polish situation

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[16] *Ibidem*, p. 124.
[17] *Ibidem*, esp. pp. 42-44, 48-61, and passim.
[18] G. Krzywiec, *op. cit*, pp. 310-311, 315.

and the problems that Spain had after losing its overseas empire; he also dwelt on the potential advantages of having, as it were, two homelands, a „smaller" one and a „broader", colonial or post-colonial one, that is, in the Polish case, the one extended to the borderlands[19]. In this connection, it may be worth to note the interest of Polish national activists in the Finnish example of relationships between native majority and the elite of Swedish origins.

The sources of inspiration for Dmowski's ideas are quite telling. At the beginning of the 20th century, it was mainly the political and social system of Anglo-Saxon countries, and in particular of imperial Britain (including its interrnal two-party parliamentary system), that seemed to be the ideal and benchmark for the Polish national movement leader. A comprehensive account – in part anecdotal - of this aspects of Dmowski's thought can be found in a work by Alvin Marcus Fountain II[20]. And it was such „British", nationally selfish stance that served Dmowski as a starting point for his critique and rebuttal of what we called here „traditional Polish historical culture". At the same time, he wanted to replace it with modern Polish identity, based on, also very British, pronciple „right or wrong, but my country".

Dmowski also wished to introduce British, Japanese, or even German models of relationships with nations that inhabited the territories of the former Commonwealth. Openly and brutally, he challenged Ukrainians, writing: „If Ruthenians (Ukrainians) are to become Poles, then let's Polonise them; and if they want to be an independent, viable and strong Ruthenian (Ukrainian) nation then let them toil for what they want to have, let them harden in the fire of struggles"[21]. It may be hard to believe that the above was written by a politician from Russionised and Germanised nation bereft of its own independent state. But we have to add that, to his credit, Dmowski in this respect was not a holder of double moral standards, and explicitly conceded that other egoistic nations, like Germans or Russians, may pursue their own selfish policy towards Poles.

Two competitive visions of Poland – Piłsudski i Dmowski

In 1902, when the domestic political struggle in Poland became more rough, also in response to some international developments, Dmowski abandoned his relatively moderate and „pedagogical" attitude, exemplified, for instance, in his aforementioned work „Myśli

[19] R. Dmowski, *Myśli,* p. 144.
[20] A.M. Fountain, *Roman Dmowski: Party, Tactics, Ideology*, New York, pp. 47-63.
[21] R. Dmowski, *Myśli,* s. 98, 100.

nowoczesnego Polaka", and strengthened his propaganda offensive against representatives of the „traditional order". But the „traditional Poles" would not give in without a fight to the „historical necessity" promoted by the „modern" ones. Moreover, they even launched a counter-offensive which began with the publication of a pamphlet, quite tellingly titled „Nasze stronnictwa skrajne" [Our domestic extremists], written together by Antoni Chołoniewski, an ultrapatriotic activist for Polish independence, and Erazm Piltz, a liberal politician seeking compromise with the partition powers; the publication was financed by conservatives from Galicia[22], all of which shows how the „old parties", so different and divided between themselves, managed to close their ranks when threatened by the new national movement.

In addition, also the traditional Polish patriots proved able to accomodate to new environment shaped by more and more pronounced modernisation processes that took place in Central Europe. Paradoxical as it may seem, the main features of the traditional vision of Poland were accepted by the (at least in theory progressive) main Polish workers party (Polish Socialist Party). Though in the socialist version, the former Commonwealth was to be replaced by free federation of nations. The elements of traditional Polish-Jewish symbiosis (typical of the former Commonwealth) could also be found in the Polish socialist movement, as exemplified in the leadership of the party. Two co-fouders of the party were Józef Piłsudski, a model representative of „early modern Polish nation", and Stanisław Mendelson, a typical Polish Jew, who before he turned to Zionism, had on several occasions declared that Poland reduced to its ethnic lands would be a historically absurd entity.[23] And one of the leading socialist activists and thinkers, Kazimierz Kelles-Krauze, went so far as to postulate the idea of Polish „socialist nation".

All the routes to Independent Poland begin in... Tokyo

We left Major Fukushima when he departed from Poland (both the „historical" and the „ethnic" one) and set off on his long horse journey across Siberia to his Japanese homeland. In 1904, that on many accounts was a breakthrough year, his experience and knowledge of Polish affairs proved to be valuable for other Japanese intelligence officers and diplomats. As a result, two outstanding Polish politicians (who soon were to become leaders of the Polish political scene), Dmowski and Piłsudski, were invited to visit faraway Japan. For Japanese military officials and politicians, at the time engaged in victorious war with the Russian

[22] Scriptor [E. Piltz, A. Chołoniewski], *Nasze stronnictwa skrajne*, Kraków 1903 r.
[23] G. Krzywiec, op.cit, p. 158.

Empire, of the two, Dmowski might have been a better partner in discussion on world politics. However, in the long run, the talks held in Tokyo brought no important outcomes for any of the sides. W can only say that after his visit to Japan, Dmowski was deeply impressed by Japanese culture, including political one, and wanted to adopt some of the Japanese internal arrangements in Poland. Piłsudski, though less brilliant and polished, got some more tangible results from his talks in Tokyo: he agreed with his Japanese partners that his party, PPS, would organise sabotage and intelligence action against Russia, and on this account, he obtained quite fair sums of money that helped him a good deal in his future military and political career.

We also know that Piłsudski and Dmowski had a long, principal political discussion in Tokyo that was said to last as many as nine hours. They didn't reach any agreement, for they couldn't. The differences between them were too deep, and not the least important of them was the fact that Japanese teahouses were the scene of discussions between the son of a small businessman from the capital of Polish Kingdom (i.e. from the very heart of ethnic Poland) and the son of a rich country gentleman from Polish borderlands. But of course, neither of them was so narrow-minded as to build his vision of Poland exclusively on his personal experience. They had different conceptions both of the general aims of Polish politics and of tactics needed to achieve them. And this resulted from their divergent visions of Poland..

Piłsudski wished to rebuild Poland that would include in its territory his native Wilno region and the whole eastern borderlands. He made it clear in his talks with Dmowski. And it was in Tokyo where (with the help of Japanese subsidies) his road to achieve this goal started – through military fight with Russia. His activity in Fight Organisation of PPS, rifle organisations, and finally Polish Legions, and more generally his allegiance to Central States [Państwa Centralne] during World War I, were only logical consequence of this fundamental choice. But Dmowski had different ideas. In his view, it was not the weak and revolutionised Russia, but powerful Germany that posed the greatest threat to the ethnic heart of Polish identity, situated by him in the Prussian partition and Polish Kingdom. He believed that Poles should take part in a peaceful evolution of the Russian Empire, seeking compromise with those Russians (mainly from among pro-Western and anti-German liberal imperialists) who were willing to concede some gradual autonomisation of Polish Kingdom which, in turn, would let Polish politicians to intensify their diplomatic efforts for reconstruction of independent Polish state. All his activities – his leading role in Polish mass national movement in 1905, his membership in Russian Duma, his political writings, and in particular his book „Niemcy Rosja i kwestia polska" [Germany, Russia, and the Polish cause],

and his diplomatic efforts to include the revival of Poland in the program of anti-German alliance, Entente – were geared to this goal. Finally, he became the leader of Polish delegation to the peace congress in Verailles, quite ironically, on behalf of the Head of Polish State, Józef Piłsudski.

The Polish state that ultimately emerged thanks to their efforts, and in the heat of military and diplomatic struggles, as well as domestic political disputes, was to some extent a synthesis of both visions, but inevitably incosistent one. Both Dmowski and Piłsudski had died before independent Poland, their creation, collapsed in 1939 under the blows of its longstanding enemies, Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany. But the legacy of their political thought outlived its authors. Subsequent generation of Polish politicians drew on their ideas so extensively that some even used to say that Polish politics remained in the shade of „two coffins". For the problems Poland faced after defeat in 1939, and after Jalta in 1945 might have been not quite the same but certainly considerably similar.