
Between Fascination and Contempt

Jews and Judaism in the Writings of Rev. Prof. Józef Kruszyński (1877–1953), Pre-War Rector of the Catholic University of Lublin¹

Anna Jolanta Majdanik

Abstract: In the first part of the essay, the author presents a sketch of the life and works of Rev. Józef Kruszyński, the Rector of the Catholic University of Lublin. In the second part, she analyzes Kruszyński's anti-Jewish writings, collected in the series "From the Field of Judeology," against the backdrop of his broad literary work, most of which was made up by his original translations (including his translation of books of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Polish) and publications focused on the study of the Bible. Finally, the author retraces and examines the emergence of Kruszyński's anti-Jewish views.

Keywords: Józef Kruszyński; antisemitism

Józef Kruszyński – His Life, Activity, and Views on Jews

Józef Kruszyński² was born on March 18, 1877, in Poraj, a settlement in Parzniewice village, Bogdanów parish, Piotrków county. He came from a peasant family. In June 1894, he sat his entrance exams in general history, Polish, and Latin, and after passing was accepted into the Theological Seminary in Włocławek (Stopniak, 1964, p. 7). There, he took Italian, French, and German. However, due to widespread negative connotations associated with the Germans, he quickly abandoned the latter class. After he graduated from the seminary in 1899, his superiors decided to send him to continue his education at the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy, the only Roman Catholic university allowed to teach clergymen from the Kingdom of Poland (Kłoczowski, Müllerowa & Skar-

1 The essay is based on a previously unpublished master's thesis written by the author under the name Anna Łysiak, titled *Publicystyka żydowska ks. Józefa Kruszyńskiego i jej uwarunkowania polityczno-kulturowe w okresie II Rzeczypospolitej* [Rev. Józef Kruszyński's Jewish Writings and Their Political and Cultural Context under the Second Polish Republic] (Łysiak, 2001).

2 On Józef Kruszyński, see: his memoirs, penned in the twilight years of his life, from November 1952 to 1953, typewritten manuscript available in the Library of the Higher Theological Seminary (Wyższe Seminarium Duchowne) in Włocławek under the title *Moje wspomnienia* [My Memoirs] (Kruszyński, 1952–1953); biographical note, along with a select bibliography of the subject, compiled by Stanisław Librowski for *Polski słownik biograficzny* [Polish Biographical Dictionary] (Librowski, 1975, pp. 442–443) and Librowski's essay "Spuścizna rektora Józefa Kruszyńskiego jako źródło do historii Uniwersytetu" [The legacy of Rector Józef Kruszyński as Source for the History of the University] (Librowski, 1992, pp. 380–389); biographical note, along with first-person and third-person bibliographies, drafted by Kazimierz Rulka for *Słownik polskich teologów katolickich* [Dictionary of Polish Catholic Theologians] (Rulka, 1983, pp. 215–222); and the following articles: Stopniak, 1964; Metelski, 1997.

bek, 1986, p. 265).³ In his memoirs, Kruszyński recorded that the Academy had five seats for applicants from the Diocese of Włocławek (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 20).⁴

At the Academy, Kruszyński was an autodidact, made frequent use of the library, and even began teaching himself Persian. His friends went as far as giving him the sobriquet “The Persian,” which further spurred him to pursue his interest in the Middle East.⁵ Kruszyński also took Hebrew classes at the Academy, taught by Rev. Justyn Bonawentura Pranajtis⁶ (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 29). Learning the language brought him much joy because, as he notes in his memoirs, it allowed him to deepen his study of the Holy Bible. This eagerness for hermeneutics led his friends to nickname him “Melamed” and “Rabbi Akiba,” which he discusses in *Moje wspomnienia*:

Persian then inspired me to study Hebrew and it proved a splendid choice. I was glad to be able to take a deeper dive into the subject, which, in turn, would make my future study of the Holy Book easier. This gave my classmates opportunity to call me funny names, such as Melamed or Rabbi Akiba, but I felt neither hurt nor offended by it (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 30).

Later on, after he had graduated and committed himself to writing and theological work, one of the pseudonyms he used was “Abel Nahbi.”⁷

In July 1902, Bishop Henryk Kossowski, the suffragan bishop in Włocławek, conferred the subdiaconate on Kruszyński, followed by a diaconate the next week (Stopniak, 1964, p. 7). Kruszyński graduated from the Saint Petersburg Academy with a successful de-

3 “Furthermore, future clergymen from these partitions [Prussian and Austrian] were offered much better opportunities in terms of studying at theological departments of German universities or re-Polonized universities in Galicia, which had their own divinity schools. [...] the Russian partition held only one Catholic higher education facility, the Roman Catholic Theological Academy in Saint Petersburg, but it admitted only a very limited number of clergymen” (Kłoczowski, Müllerowa & Skarbek, 1986, p. 265).

4 “[...] all Catholic dioceses were allotted a seat quota, i.e. the number of alumni they could send to Saint Petersburg for further schooling” (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 21).

5 “The East has appealed to me ever since I was a child. Alas, I could not structure my coursework accordingly, because I simply did not have the money to do so. Today I can no longer remember the reason for or circumstances in which one of my friends first jokingly called me a Persian. But the name stuck. The moniker was bestowed on me ironically and somewhat maliciously, but I took no offense. At the Academy, I thought to myself: you may have called me a Persian, but I will show you that I am indeed bound to the East in some way, I will discover and learn the culture of some Eastern nation and prove to you how prophetic your sobriquet was” (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 29).

6 Rev. Justyn Bonawentura Pranajtis (1861–1917) – professor at the Theological Academy in Saint Petersburg, Hebraist, and parish priest in Tashkent. In 1878, he joined the Sejny Priest Seminary, and in 1883 was selected for further studies at the Theological Academy in Saint Petersburg, where he became known for his masterful command of Hebrew. He took his holy orders in 1886 in Griškabūdis. In 1887, he began teaching Hebrew at the Theological Academy, and later took over liturgy and church music courses. He was appointed Prefect at the Academy in 1891, but four years later was removed from the post and exiled to Tver for underground activity; he returned to the Academy in 1899 and worked there until 1902. Pranajtis was adored by his students. He was interested in Judaism, particularly in the Talmud. Pranajtis authored the antisemitic tract *Chrześcijanin w Talmudzie Żydowskim, czyli tajemnicza nauka rabinistyczna o chrześcijanach* [Christians in the Talmud or the Secret Rabbinic Teachings about the Christians] (the book was published in 1892 in Latin, in 1894 in German, in 1939 in English; the first Polish edition was published in 1892, the second in 1937) and a number of magazine articles, including for the *Rola* weekly. In 1913, he was called by the minister of justice of the Russian Empire as an expert witness to testify on matters of the Jewish religion during the trial of Menahem Mendel Beilis, who was falsely accused of committing ritual murder. See: Żebrowski, 2003, pp. 157–158.

7 Kruszyński used a number of other pseudonyms and monikers, including Ks. [“Rev.”], J.K., Kr., jk., jotka [“jay-kay”], Abel Nahbi, Bogumił Pakuła – see: Rulka, 1983, p. 215.

fense of his master's thesis, *Jesus Filius Dei in Evangeliiis*, on a subject he personally selected (Stopniak, 1964, p. 7). On March 14, already as a newly minted master of divinity, Kruszyński received the holy orders in Saint Petersburg from the Bishop of Płock, Count Jerzy Szembek. Later that year, following his return to Poland, the 26-year-old Kruszyński was named vicar for the Radomsko parish. It is in the passages in *Moje wspomnienia* which deal with his time in Radomsko that Kruszyński first mentions the so-called Jewish question (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, pp. 35–36).⁸ The memoirs reveal that the cleric was involved with the local boycott of Jewish-owned businesses and effort to support Christian-owned establishments. Kruszyński also describes another event tied to Radomsko's Jewish community, not only in *Moje wspomnienia* but also in a footnote in his 1925 book *Talmud co zawiera i co naucza* [The Talmud, What It Says and What It Teaches] (Kruszyński, 1925). Both accounts deal with the purchase of a Talmud and suggest that the priest already saw himself an expert on not just Biblical Judaism but also its Rabbinic and Modern interpretations; he even came to call himself a "Hebraist," claiming that he was known in the local Jewish community on account of his particular interests. *Moje wspomnienia* gives the following account:

And so word spread among the Jews that I was a Hebraist and read their holy books. All of this came about because I sought to purchase a Talmud that I noticed at one of their bookbinders – an abbreviated, two-volume version, published in Berdychiv. [...] The Jews called it the Berdychiv Pocket Talmud. The Jew looked me over, expressed his great surprise, but had [...] no reason to refuse me the sale. He eventually agreed, provided the book would be brought to me some time later. After a messenger boy had delivered the Talmud to me, I began to examine the tome and realized, to no small surprise, that two entire sheets – 32 pages dealing with the goyim, which I knew contained many unflattering, offensive phrases about Christianity – were missing. That would not have been particularly difficult, as the Talmud was unbound and poorly sewn together. I protested with the vendor and demanded that the remainder of the holy book be given to me. When the man balked, claiming that the sheets were never there, I threatened that I would complain to the local police. Alarmed by the prospect, the Jews brought me the two missing sheets. The news of the confrontation must have spread quickly. [...] This brought me a measure of respect in the Jewish community, but also made me the source of much apprehension that I could be a danger to them, even by way of their own holy book. I sought no such recourse, as I was far from willing to incite Poles against the Jewish people. After all, the unfavorable picture of Christianity painted in the Talmud was no secret (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 36).

That same event is described somewhat differently in a footnote included in *Talmud co zawiera i co naucza*:

I shall illustrate the ways the Jews use to conceal from the Christians the teaching of the Talmud, using an example drawn from my own experience. In 1903, while still a vicar in Radomsko, I visited a Jewish bookbinder to have a book taken care of. There, I saw a new copy of the Babylonian Talmud, a two-volume edition, unbound. I asked the shopkeeper whether it was for sale. "Certainly," the man replied. Hearing this, I put out the money and ordered the

8 The term "Jewish question" was used in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in social, political, economic, cultural, and religious contexts, primarily in discussions of the role and place of Jews in Europe. The negatively charged phrase was universally utilized by antisemites for the purpose of pointing out the threat that Jews posed to the world.

two volumes bound. A few days later, the Jew brought me the book. As I examined it, I noticed that it was stripped of the *Avodah Zarah*, the tractate of the Talmud that was the richest in anti-Christian sentiment. Asked about the missing chapter, the embarrassed bookbinder replied that it must have already been pulled from the copy prior to purchase. But fully certain that the man was lying, I demanded that the missing pages be returned to me, adding that I was prepared to take appropriate steps if my request was ignored. The warning worked on the Jew. He took the bound volume and returned with the tractate inserted back from where it was pulled, explaining profusely that he simply did not want the Talmudic texts to be misunderstood. Although, he argued, the tractate indeed featured some ambiguities, the rabbinic authorities commanded that they be interpreted in a more benevolent manner. Naturally, the assertion was exactly as truthful as his earlier assurances about his copy of the Talmud missing the *Avodah Zarah* tractate (Kruszyński, 1925, pp. 63–64).

The latter account introduces an important term: *Avodah Zarah* (Hebrew for “idolatry”), which is the name of the eighth tractate from the *Nezikin*, the fourth order of the *Mishnah*. Comprising five chapters, the tractate deals with issues related to religious practices considered idolatry and places of idolatric worship. The text outlines the principles that need to be followed in contacts with persons believed to be idolaters, such as proscriptions against trading or consorting with them or using their wine (Borzymińska, 2003, p. 127). The tractate was particularly popular with antisemitic authors writing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The snippets of the text and interpretations these authors used were usually rife with substantial errors, biased fabrications, phrases that were either poorly translated or taken out of context – all of which was pointed out, typically right after publication, by scholars from Jewish, Christian, and independent circles. Although the fiercely antisemitic readings of the tractate and Talmud in general were always eventually discredited, they were nevertheless endlessly spread and popularized by representatives of different circles and milieus, even including some academics.⁹

After spending around a year in Radomsko, in late August 1904, Kruszyński returned to Włocławek, where he was appointed Prefect at the Seminary and took over Holy Scripture classes from Rev. Stanisław Mirecki. It was also around that time that he began learning English (Stopniak, 1964, p. 8). At the Seminary, the 27-year-old Kruszyński taught courses on Old and New Testaments, Hebrew, and biblical archeology. In 1905, he was appointed Vice Regent to the Rector, Rev. Idzi Radziszewski.

Between 1905 and 1909, he traveled, for research purposes, to Great Britain and the Middle East, paying his own way in both instances (Librowski, 1975, p. 442). Thus, early July 1905 marked his first visit to the United Kingdom. While in London, he spent long hours at the British Museum, probing and examining exhibits, prowling collections related to the Bible and the Orient and voraciously reading through the seminal body of literature on either subject, taking copious notes in the process (Stopniak, 1964, p. 9; Metelski, 1997, p. 16). During his subsequent trip to England and Ireland, in July 1906,

9 For a broader take on the subject, see the chapter “Talmud w ogniu debat” [Talmud in the Heat of Debates] in my doctoral dissertation: Majdanik-Lysiak, 2007, pp. 160–254. A copy can be found in the Jagiellonian Library.

he managed to visit Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, where he familiarized himself with the local academic milieu (Metelski, 1997, p. 16). On the return leg, he toured France. At that time he also had multiple subscriptions to Bible magazines published by both Catholic and Protestant outlets (Stopniak, 1964, p. 9), worked to broaden his academic horizons, and already had multiple writing credits to his name. On December 24, 1907, he left for the Middle East. Upon reaching Jerusalem, he visited the Western Wall. A passage in *Moje wspomnienia* describes his impressions of Jews praying by the Wall:

It was also known as the Wailing Wall, because the Jews often wipe their eyes with handkerchiefs during prayer. The wailing, however, is not necessarily motivated by sweeping emotion; I've seen Jews approaching the Wall conversing normally, doing business, and then wailing emphatically at the sight of it. And because it is seen appropriate to cry there, we are prone to suspect that in most cases, the crying is feigned and intentional (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 92).

On his way back to Poland, Kruszyński managed to visit the academic centers in Naples, Rome, and Padua (Stopniak, 1964, p. 10).

The exploration of alleged superficiality, shallowness, and perfunctory nature of Jewish religiosity, as well as tendency to reduce Judaism to pure formalism and nationalism, are typical of Kruszyński's "Judeological" writings.¹⁰ The title "Judeologist" was used to describe Christians believed to have expert knowledge of and insight into Judaism and Jewish matters, but the views espoused by these people were antisemitic. The term was also applied to publications, conferences, and institutions. At this point, it should be mentioned that accusations levied by these self-professed "Judeologists" drew reactions from a handful of rabbis in Poland, who responded with publications and public declarations.¹¹ In 1933, Oriental historian and rabbi Moses (Mojżesz) Schorr founded the Association of Rabbis with Higher Education (*Zrzeszenie Rabinów o Wyższem Wykształceniu*), an organization dedicated to fostering a revival of religious life among Zionists and the more intellectual tradesmen and merchants as well as educating Christian communities about Judaism and Jewish matters, with the latter goal driven primarily by the spread of anti-Jewish pamphlets and literature produced by "Judeologists."¹²

10 Cf. Kruszyński's article "W sprawie żydowskiej" [Regarding the Jews]: "It would seem that they are deeply religious, but it's actually quite the opposite. The religious life of Jews is shallow – so shallow in fact that it stands apart from all other developed religions. [...] If we were to find ourselves in a synagogue, even during the most solemn services, like on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), we would be struck by the strange lack of understanding of what we call the spirit of prayer. The prayers held on that day seem bizarrely coerced, as if performed to fulfill an unwanted duty: no more lines of prayer are read than is required to satisfy tradition and religious injunction. The prayers lack spiritual intent, no one seems moved by the spirit of the religion. The service exudes emptiness, and seems a formalist, lifeless practice, unable to penetrate the soul of man. [...] The formal requirements met, the faithful exit the temple pleased with how they discharged their sacred duty and read the prescribed number of prayers, and come home, content, where they can continue with their lives in peace, even if their course goes against natural ethics" (Kruszyński, 1938a, p. 201).

11 For a broader take on the subject, see: Majdanik-Łysiak, 2007, pp. 160–254.

12 In the Polish-Jewish magazine *Opinia* (1933) Mojżesz Schorr wrote: "Not since the time of the French emancipation has Judaism been so hotly debated, from warranted and unwarranted angles, as it is today. And never before has the fruit of this 'Judeology' penetrated so far into the public consciousness; in our times, Polish Jews

Having visited England for the third time, in 1911 Kruszyński set out on another research trip, to the Balkans and Asia Minor.¹³ The expeditions greatly influenced his academic trajectory, and prompted a number of publications, particularly in 1909–1913 (Stopniak, 1964, p. 10).¹⁴ In 1911, Kruszyński was released from the post of Vice Rector at the Seminary, and in 1913 he transferred to the newly established state *gimnazjum* [middle school in partitioned Poland – trans. note] in Włocławek, with Russian as the primary language of instruction, where he took over as Prefect (Stopniak, 1964, p. 11; Librowski, 1975, p. 442).

Around 1915, according to his own account penned in *Moje wspomnienia*, Kruszyński became involved with political and social activism. Although, by his own admission, he was not really interested in throwing himself into similar efforts, he eventually relented and entered the race for a city council seat. Kruszyński explained his decision by saying that laypersons encouraged him to get involved in local politics, while his superiors saw nothing wrong with his doing so. He wanted his political activities to focus primarily on defending Christians against Jews, who, Kruszyński himself argued, managed to secure considerable influence and important positions under the German occupation authorities, to the pronounced detriment of Polish Christians. Councilors served three-year terms, so Kruszyński must have left his seat in 1918.

His public efforts at the time, however, were not limited to his activities on the City Council. From 1917 to 1922, he served as the director of the General Diocese Printing and Publishing Works (Księgarnia Powszechna i Drukarnia Diecezjalna) in Włocławek and edited a number of magazines, including *Wiara i Życie* [Faith and Life] weekly, the *Słowo Kujawskie* [Kuyavian News] daily, and *Kalendarz Powszechny* [Popular Calendar] (Stopniak, 1964, p. 11; Librowski, 1975, p. 442). He authored most of the editorial content printed in these papers between 1917 and 1922, because, as Kruszyński mentions

remain particularly vulnerable to the most vile and despicable attacks, cutting at the very core of their holiest ideals. [...] Judaism requires our protection, enlightened, intellectual stewardship based on exhaustive insight into its deepest roots. And universal, scientific truth will be our best recourse, as only such truth can best inform public opinion, among Poles and among ourselves, that at the deepest heart of Judaism lies ethics, whose particular value stems from its ability to permeate all walks of life and society" (Schorr, 1933, p. 6).

13 In discussions of his trip to the Balkans and the Middle East, authors of Kruszyński's biographical notes or profiles often use different dates taken from different sources. "In a handwritten note (AKUL – personnel file of the Rector 1925–1933, 1945), we read: '1908 – Syria, Palestine, Egypt; 1913 – the Balkans, Asia Minor; 1914 – Palestine, Egypt'" (Metelski, 1997, p. 16). Stopniak, meanwhile, references pages 109–120 of *Moje wspomnienia* and writes: "in 1911, travelling through Vienna, Budapest, Zagreb, Mostar, Sarajevo, Dalmatia, Brindisi, Corfu, Saloniki, Pathros, Corinth, Athens, Piraeus, and Constantinople, he made thorough visits to major centers of ancient culture" (Stopniak, 1964, p. 10). Librowski, finally, offers the following dates and places: "In 1911 or 1912, he set out on a long research trip to the Balkans and Asia Minor" (Librowski, 1975, p. 442). Cf. "In 1911 in the footsteps of Saint Paul – the Balkans and Asia Minor" (Łoza, 1938, p. 386).

14 "Moreover, from as early as 1909 all the way to 1923, he had a number of columns in the *Ateneum Kapłańskie* [Clerical Atheneum], including a column on science, on religion, and on the Orient. He published with *Przewodnik Społeczny* [The Social Companion], *Słowo i Czyn* [Words and Deeds], *Przegląd Powszechny* [The Popular Review], *Przegląd Katolicki* [The Catholic Review], *Biblioteka Warszawska* [The Warsaw Reader], *Kronika Diecezji Kujawsko-Kaliskiej* [Kuyavian-Kalisz Diocese Chronicle], and others. His travelogues ran in *Gazeta Warszawska* [The Warsaw Gazette], *Goniec Kujawski* [The Kuyavian Courier], and other newspapers, either under his own by-line or marked with the initials J.K." (Stopniak, 1964, p. 10). See also: Rulka, 1983, pp. 216–222; Stopniak, 1964, p. 11; Librowski, 1975, p. 442.

in his memoirs, neither title had enough money to hire proper writing staff.¹⁵ Aside from that, he also sat on the Care Council (Rada Opiekuńcza), a charitable social welfare organization, where his duties included overseeing the publication of the Council's annual calendar (Stopniak, 1964, p. 11; Librowski, 1975, p. 442).

The efforts outlined above still do not exhaust the extent of his initiatives. Around 1917, he became involved with the Interparty Political Circle (Koło Międzypartyjne), an organization with a national slant and a number of political and charitable objectives, operating primarily in Włocławek and Lipno counties, which actively opposed local socialist movements.¹⁶ In 1919, he was offered a teaching position at a private *gimnazjum* for girls, newly established by Aleksandra Aspis in Włocławek. There, he taught religion, general history, and Latin until 1922. His students included Jewish girls, a detail he describes in his memoirs:

There was no school that would not attract Jewish youth looking for good education. Some Jewish circles were prejudiced against me, because of my stance on the Jewish question and because I often spoke out against the Jews. My female Jewish students came from good homes, where my position was understood, so I had no trouble from their families. As their exit exams drew nearer, the Jewish girls treated me no differently than their Polish friends, they also sought my help and patronage (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 151).

On February, 12, 1918, Kruszyński's father died. In *Moje wspomnienia*, the priest writes that he left for his native Piotrków immediately after receiving the telegram, but the trains ran on a rather irregular schedule and he ended up spending the entire night at the Skierniewice train station. According to his account, at the station he met a number of Jews, with whom he began discussing a range of matters related to the Bible and the Talmud. He claims that what began as a small group soon grew into quite a crowd – around 100 people. Kruszyński recalls climbing up on a bench and passionately addressing the congregation for around three hours, while Jews came and went. During those three hours, the priest allegedly explored the Holy Bible and the Talmud, along with the latter's "bitter truths," to use his words. The account asserts that the Jews failed to offer a significant reaction to his words, but Kruszyński then emphasizes how despite his own zeal in the matter, he spoke in calm and measured tones, taking particular care not to offend anyone. Returning from his father's funeral, he kept thinking back to the events at the station. He justified his actions by saying that he simply sought to convert the Jews, as such conversions were not unheard of at the time (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 149).

15 See: "Anyone willing to go through the archives from the years 1917 to 1919 will easily see that nearly all of the content was penned by the same hand – mine, that is" (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 150).

16 "The Interparty Political Circle also had a number of strictly philanthropic objectives, and so the Germans authorities saw it as a charity organization. Besides, no German official would grant it license to become anything else... [...] The Circle occupied an important position and was a key voice. It opposed the socialists, so they fought against it and ridiculed it any way they could. Its member roster included nearly all of the country's landowners. Artur Rutkowski, the lord of Szpetal Górny, was elected president, while I was the vice president" (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 150).

Kruszyński's earliest public appearances to explicitly target Jews, which can be traced back to 1919, quickly escalated in 1920, and continued unabated until 1925, when the Episcopate appointed Kruszyński the Rector of the Catholic University of Lublin (Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski)¹⁷ due to the institution's financial near-collapse. The nomination was followed by an injunction barring him from further political activity, including his efforts aimed against the Jews.¹⁸ While campaigning against the Jews, Kruszyński grew involved with Towarzystwo "Rozwój" [Growth Society]. Whereas Arkadiusz Kołodziejczyk puts the foundation of the group in 1913 in Warsaw (Garlicki, 1999, p. 381), Ryszard Michalski argues in *Obraz Żyda i narodu żydowskiego na łamach prasy pomorskiej w latach 1920–1939* [Portrayal of the Jew and the Jewish People in Pomeranian Press Titles Published in 1920–1939] that Towarzystwo "Rozwój" grew out of Samoobrona [Self-Defense] in 1921, merely a year after the latter was established (Michalski, 1997, p. 28). What scholars do agree on, however, is that the group was founded for the purpose of supporting Polish-owned enterprises by driving their Jewish-run competition out of business, a plan encapsulated by the slogan "Locals buy local from locals" ("Swoj do swego po swoje"). The group organized manufacturers into craftsmen and merchant unions, encouraged customers to join a Consumer League (Liga Konsumentów), and ran multiple propaganda campaigns. The latter included holding conferences, most of which dealt with the alleged dangers posed by the Jewish community, which at the time were commonly called the "Jewish peril" (*niebezpieczeństwo żydowskie*), and publishing pamphlets and press titles with a national and anti-Jewish slant. Its members organized rallies, boycotts of Jewish businesses and goods, and distributed anti-Jewish leaflets (Michalski, 1997, pp. 28–29). The association was closely linked with Narodowa Demokracja [National Democracy]. It also had a press arm in the form of the *Rozwój* [Growth] weekly.¹⁹ The efforts of Towarzystwo "Rozwój," the group's particular character, and the influence it had over the formation of antisemitic attitudes in Poland still have not been exhaustively studied. However, remaining records such as the *Minutes of the First Conference on Judeology (Pamiętnik I Konferencji Żydoznawczej odbytej w grudniu 1921 roku w Warszawie, 1923)* and the fact that the organization itself was forcibly disbanded in 1923 by Władysław Sikorski's government on account of its virulent anti-semitism, may offer some indication as to its particular character (Sobczak, 1998, p. 146).

17 The University of Lublin was founded on July 27, 1918, at the Assembly of Bishops of the Kingdom of Poland, with the express consent of the papal nuncio. In 1928, the university renamed itself the Catholic University of Lublin. Although initially a private higher education facility, before the Second World War it managed to obtain the full rights of a state university.

18 "Thus I gave up writing about the Jews and the Jewish question. After my appointment as Rector of the Catholic University of Lublin, I was asked by Cardinal Kakowski, as President of the University Council, to renounce my efforts against the Jews, on account that this would impede my work as head of an academic institution. I complied, naturally. And indeed, as Rector, I encountered much pro-Jewish sympathies in government circles, and I was regularly reproached for having spoken out against Jews" (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, s. 158). See: Librowski, 1975, p. 442.

19 The *Rozwój* weekly should not be confused with the social and political daily *Rozwój*, which ran in Łódź from 1897 to 1931. After 1931, the right-leaning magazine was published under the title *Prąd* [The Stream], and was intended for an intellectual audience. W. Czajewski and T. Czajewski served as publishers and editors-in-chief, while S. Łapiński, E. Bartoszek, S. Bańkowski, W. Żuchowski served as managing editors (Garlicki, 1999, pp. 381–382).

We know that Józef Kruszyński was involved with a number of conferences organized by Towarzystwo “Rozwój” and Liga Samoobrony [Self-Defense League] in many cities across Poland. For example, on October 9, 1921, in Toruń, he spoke at length on the peril presented by the “anonymous world power” (*anonimowe mocarstwo*) of the Jewry, whose influence he believed to be “all-encompassing and international,” and decried Jews who allegedly controlled contemporary politics and used their far-reaching leverage to undermine Polish interests. He also took part in conferences held in Bydgoszcz (November 1921), Poznań (December 1921), Łódź (October and December 1922), Kraków, Tarnów, Jasło, Mielec, and Bochnia (all in July 1922).²⁰

Towarzystwo “Rozwój” also had a publishing arm, notorious for its “Judeology Library” (“Biblioteczka Żydoznawcza”) series. We would do well to point out here that the second Polish edition of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was published in 1923 by that very imprint (*Protokoły mędrców Sjonu*, 1923). Later that same year, this publishing house released Józef Kruszyński’s *Dlaczego występuję przeciwko Żydom?* [Why Do I Speak Out Against the Jews?] (Kruszyński, 1923a), with a foreword penned by the head of the Towarzystwo, Edward Zajączek. However, the overwhelming majority of Kruszyński’s books and pamphlets were published by the General Diocese Printing and Publishing Works in Włocławek.

The Towarzystwo was also responsible for putting up posters attacking the Jewish population of Włocławek. Tomasz Kawski writes that the Catholic clergy had a hand in stoking anti-Jewish sentiment and Kruszyński’s attitudes and writings seem to corroborate the notion. Some sought to play on economic uncertainty and called for “nationalizing trade,” others attacked along political lines, equating Jews with communists, while still others chose religious angles, using phrases like “Do not let Jews peddle the sacred blood of Christ” (Kawski, 1999, p. 145).

Kruszyński’s personnel file in the Archives of the Catholic University of Lublin still holds the many telegrams wishing him well and congratulating him on his appointment as Rector of the University in 1925. The messages came from both fellow clergymen and laypersons, including Bishop Zdzitowiecki, Cardinal Cieśliński, Rev. Wojs, Rev. Wyszyński, and the Urbański family. The file also carries congratulatory telegrams from the General Board and the Executive Council of Towarzystwo “Rozwój,” the organization’s branch in Skarżysko, and even individual felicitations from its head, Edward Zajączek. Inside the dossier also sit the thank-you notes that Kruszyński wrote to his well-wishers, including a letter dated June 23, 1925, and addressed to the General Board of the Towarzystwo “Rozwój” on 2 Żurawia Street in Warsaw:

My most heartfelt thanks for your wishes. I have shared the ideas behind Rozwój from the organization’s earliest days and have done whatever I could to empower them. God willing, these ideas of ours will spread widely across all of society, because only then will we be able

20 See the file *Recenzje, krytyki, wzmianki 1921–(1923)* [Reviews, Critiques, Mentions 1921–(1923)] in the Library of the Higher Theological Seminary in Włocławek.

to commit ourselves to defending our homeland from foreign onslaught (Archiwum KUL: Ks. prof. dr Józef Kruszyński, *Akta osobiste, 1923–1949* [1968], rep. 124, N., p. 44).

The letter clearly demonstrates that Kruszyński shared much of the Towarzystwo's ideals and identified with them.

Coming back to Kruszyński's earlier days, we ought to point out that he did not seek reelection to the City Council in 1919, but instead ran for seat in the second Sejm in 1922, representing the Popular National Union (Związek Ludowo-Narodowy, later the National Party – Stronnictwo Narodowe), a decision he outlines in his journal: "While I was caught up in the election whirlwind, I was particularly fond of the idea that as a representative in the Sejm I could work much more effectively to enlighten the people about the Jewish question" (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 159).²¹ The memoirs reveal, however, that his enthusiasm soon began sputtering out, mostly on account of the intensity of the electoral fight (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 159).²²

The precise date of Kruszyński's initial contacts with National Democracy is not known. In his aforesaid book *Dlaczego występuję przeciwko Żydom?*, Kruszyński mentions his April 1919 visit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during which he spoke with officials about potential inquiries into Jewish politics, which, he alleged, was a threat to Poland and its sovereignty. Kruszyński then says that he was received by a chief of staff, although he himself planned to meet with the Prime Minister, Ignacy Paderewski:

At the Ministry, which I paid a visit to, I found Minister Paderewski to be absent and was instead received by the chief of staff, Mr. O., currently a high-ranking official on foreign assignment. My offer, however, was wholly dismissed; after being kept waiting a very long time, I finally received a written notice of refusal, with the decision being explained rather ridiculously (Kruszyński, 1923a, p. 25).

The account, however, gives the impression that Kruszyński acted of his own accord at the time, rather than as a representative of any specific political option or organization.

Nevertheless, Kruszyński's early connections with National Democracy can be proven indirectly, if only by taking a look at the newspapers and magazines he cited in his treatises. In 1920, he published his first "Judeological" title: *Żydzi i kwestja żydowska*

21 "I was registered as a candidate, lists were printed with my name, along with flyers covered in slogans praising the National Party. My position was quite difficult. People who claimed to be trained agitators from Warsaw met with me to ask for instructions and money, but I had no funding. The Interparty Circle, and the National Party in general, held much of the blame. Aside from campaigning in the country, there was little I could do on my own. Agitators working for the other side of the aisle, however, put all of their efforts and deceitfulness into ridiculing the National Party and its candidates. It was stunning to see, truly. Never before in my life have I seen such a pack of lies, slander, and hearsay" (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 159); see: Librowski, 1975, p. 442.

22 "The experience was very discouraging and I began losing faith in our victory. As far as I was concerned, I no longer cared whether I would carry the election or not. At times, I sorely regretted ever putting my name up. Withdrawing from the race was out of the question, because it would seriously weaken our prospects. 'God's will be done,' I thought to myself. And I did not want to go to the countryside, on account of there being too many ragamuffins there..." (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 159).

[Jews and the Jewish Question] (Kruszyński, 1920). In the book, he referenced articles from *Głos Narodu* [Voice of the People], *Kurier Warszawski* [Warsaw Courier], *Gazeta Poranna* [Morning Gazette], *Gazeta Warszawska*, and *Myśl Niepodległa* [Independent Thought]. In his 1921 follow-up, *Polityka żydowska* [Jewish Politics] (Kruszyński, 1921c), Kruszyński drew on pieces published in *Kurier Warszawski*, *Gazeta Warszawska*, *Rzeczpospolita* [The Republic], *Kurier Łódzki* [Łódź Courier], and *Kurier Lwowski* [Lviv Courier]. Later that year, Kruszyński published *Żydzi a Polska* [Jews and Poland] (Kruszyński, 1921e), which carried references to *Kurier Warszawski*, and *Żargon żydowski* [Jewish Jargon] (Kruszyński, 1921d), in which he cited from *Kurier Warszawski* and *Rzeczpospolita*. The papers *Gazeta Warszawska* and *Kurier Poznański* [Poznań Courier] were, at the time, the most important right-wing press titles, as well as the biggest dailies and key press outlets of the National Democracy (Kamińska-Szmaj, 1994, p. 15; Paczkowski, 1983, p. 100). Other National Democracy titles invoked or referenced by Kruszyński included *Gazeta Poranna*, *Kurier Warszawski*, *Słowo Pomorskie* [Pomeranian News], and *Dziennik Bydgoski* [Bydgoszcz Daily] (Paczkowski, 1983, p. 111). Paczkowski writes that *Gazeta Poranna* was founded by Mieczysław Niklewicz, on orders from Roman Dmowski and with financial assistance from Ignacy Paderewski, as the “primary conduit for the economic boycott of Jews in the Kingdom,” but the paper’s combative stance was tempered somewhat after 1918 (Paczkowski, 1983, pp. 104–105).

Kruszyński’s biography gives no indication that he remained politically active within the National Democracy movement. Curiously, in his post-1922 treatises, Kruszyński stopped quoting newspapers almost entirely. What he continued to share with the movement, however, was the commitment to manufacturing and reinforcing the generalized, negative stereotypes of the Jewish community and the belief in the adverse, nefarious influence that Jews held over Polish political, economic, social, and cultural life; he also continued to accuse the Jews of disloyalty and involvement with international conspiracies that sought to undermine the sovereignty of the nascent Polish state; he believed that universities should introduce and maintain *numerus clausus* ethnic quotas and that Jews should necessarily be separated from the Poles; he was also convinced that economy and trade should be nationalized and the number of Jews living in Poland – reduced (cf. Sobczak, 1998; Bergman, 1998; Kulak & Kawalec, 1992, pp. 121–138).

Kruszyński was certain that Jews had to be fought and that others had to be protected against them and informed of their harmful influence. He saw his books and his talks as the most efficient methods he could field in this particular struggle.

On the Jewish question I have given many talks and held many readings, and have done so nearly all across the country, in Warsaw, Poznań, Toruń, Bydgoszcz, Włocławek, Łódź, Kraków, Tarnów, Jasło, Mielec, Bochnia, and many smaller towns. To some places, like Łódź, I came back a couple of times. I have also published a number of articles in the press, primarily with *Słowo Kujawskie* and *Słowo Pomorskie* in Toruń, and placed a longer essay in *Słowo Pomorskie* and *Rozwój*, once the latter magazine was founded. Other press titles were wary of printing

the pieces I wrote to illuminate the Jewish question, for fear of Jewish boycotts (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 158).²³

Between 1919 and 1925, Kruszyński published 14 stand-alone works with an anti-Jewish character.²⁴ In the parts of his memoirs devoted to that period, however, Kruszyński maintains that he held no prejudice against Jews, a position supposedly corroborated by the fact that he baptized 13 people of Jewish descent between 1912 and 1920. Two, on the other hand, were refused the sacrament, because he considered them insufficiently prepared to receive Christ.²⁵ In chapters of *Moje wspomnienia* dealing with the 1920s, he devoted ample space to the so-called Jewish question, which he also explored rather exhaustively in the remaining portion of the memoir.²⁶

On October 17, 1924, when Kruszyński was already teaching courses on the Old Testament and the Hebrew language at the Catholic University of Lublin, the Circuit Court in Włocławek received a motion from the Prosecutor's Office to commence a simplified investigation into Lucyna Dobrzyniecka and Józef Kruszyński, whom the authorities recommended charging under Articles 51 and 533 of the Penal Code for allegedly defaming the Control Commission of the P.K.U. (Powiatowa Komenda Uzupełnień, County Military Draft Office) in Lipno in April 1923. Dobrzyniecka wrote the article "Nasze miłe stosunekczki w Komisjach Kontrolnych P.K.U. w Lipnie" [On the Cordial Relations Inside the P.K.U. Control Commissions in Lipno], while Rev. Kruszyński made the decision to publish it in *Słowo Kujawskie* as the paper's editor-in-chief. The piece allegedly defamed the Commission by claiming that only one of its members was Polish, while the rest were Jews (Archiwum Diecezjalne we Włocławku: *Akta Ks. Józefa Kruszyńskiego* (1877–1953), pers. 159).

On November 12, 1924, Rev. Kruszyński received his post-doctoral degree (habilitation) from the Faculty of Theology at the Jagiellonian University (Librowski, 1975, p. 442) and later that year, the Senate of the Catholic University of Lublin accepted the recommendation of the Faculty of Theology to grant Kruszyński associate professorship

23 Rev. Rulka takes the dates of some of the talks from posters announcing them and from the press clipping file compiled by Józef Kruszyński, which can currently be found at the Library of the Higher Theological Seminary in Włocławek in the *Recenzje, krytyki, wzmianki 1921–(1923)* dossier: "in Warsaw, Poznań (December 17–18, 1921), Bydgoszcz (October 9, November 19–20, 1921), Włocławek, Łódź (October 14–15, December 8–10, 1922), Kraków, Tarnów (July 9, 1922), Jasto (July 14, 1922), Mielec, and Bochnia (July 7, 1922)" (Rulka, 2000, pp. 168–169).

24 Rev. Józef Kruszyński was a prolific writer; altogether, he authored around 50 stand-alone works, 100 treatises and longer essays, and a large number of reviews and notes as well as religion textbooks. He translated from Hebrew and penned commentary to nearly all the books of the Old Testament. Kruszyński also wrote a handful of biographies, novellas, and novels. He left behind a typed manuscript of his memoir. Most of his written works deal with the Bible. A separate portion of his bibliography explores themes related to Jews (which I discuss in detail later on in the article).

25 "The converts hailed from all walks of society. Doctors, dentists, a known factory owner. Two Jewish maidens from well-off families, one major merchant, and the rest from lower classes. Later on I had some more candidates for baptism, but ultimately refused them, as I did not see proper preparation and the required will" (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 158).

26 That is chiefly because his reminiscences of the 1920s also carry detailed descriptions of the contents of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and a discussion of the alleged history of their writing. Kruszyński quotes at length from Protocols Nos. 3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 16, and 17.

(Stopniak, 1964, p. 13). In 1928, the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities in Rome granted him the title of Doctor of Theology (Librowski, 1975, p. 442), following the June 17, 1925, decision of the Council of Bishops, which recommended appointing him as Rector of the Catholic University of Lublin (Stopniak, 1964, p. 14). In a letter to Bishop Fulman, the Chancellor of the University, its authors suggested Rev. Józef Kruszyński as a candidate who, due to his prior service as head of the secretariat and deputy dean, had a good grasp of the University's administrative and financial situation. At the time, Kruszyński was considered well-connected, with a broad network of contacts, which some hoped could help lift the University out of the dire financial straits it had found itself in (Stopniak, 1964, p. 13).²⁷ In 1925, following a conversation with Cardinal Aleksander Kakowski, Kruszyński agreed to stop speaking out against the Jews for the good of the University. Despite these assurances, however, he continued to write and publish works of an anti-Jewish character even after his 1925 appointment. While this output was no longer as ample, the works continued to carry considerable significance.²⁸ Two examples are particularly striking in this respect: a 1931 lecture to fellow clergymen titled *Zgubny wpływ judaizmu na duszę polską* [The Nefarious Influence of Judaism on the Polish Soul] (Kruszyński, 1931) and the entry on Jews in *Encyklopedia kościelna* [Encyclopedia of the Church] (Kruszyński, 1933), which drew largely on Kruszyński's prior publications, including his explicitly anti-Jewish writings. Both of these texts carry official *nihil obstat* and *imprimatur* certifications, implying official Catholic Church sanction.²⁹

The aforementioned 1931 lecture can be seen as outlining the position of an important Church representative on the matter of Jews and Judaism. Kruszyński delivered his address at a pastoral course, held February 10–13, 1931, in Poznań, in his capacity as Rector of the Catholic University of Lublin. The course itself, arranged under the auspices of Cardinal August Hlond, Primate of Poland, was focused on the struggle

27 "It was expected that the personal contacts and broad network of connections will help Rev. Kruszyński grow the University. And indeed, in this respect most would find it incredibly hard to outdo the erstwhile Rector. He counted among his friends Count Roztworowski of Kębtło, Baron Stanisław Wessel of Żyrzyn, Duke Seweryn Czertwyrński of Suchowola, Zawojski of Klemensów, Stadnicki of Klemensów, Stadnicki of Osmolice, Rulikowski of Mełgiew, and Michalski of Suchodół. [...] The university struggled financially in 1922–1925, when the rectorate was held first by Rev. Woroniecki and then Bishop Sokołowski. The financial situation was so dire that in March 1924 it was suggested that the school be entrusted to one of the orders, like the Jesuits. Later that year, in July, the Assembly of Bishops in Częstochowa discussed the difficult position the school was in, with the gathered hierarchs eventually deciding to keep the university afloat by all means available" (Stopniak, 1964, p. 13). See: Karolewicz, Zachajkiewicz & Zieliński, 1992, pp. 73–75.

28 These included his 1926 pamphlet *Stanisław Staszic a kwestia żydowska* [Stanisław Staszic and the Jewish Question]; see also list of publications by the professors of the University of Lublin in *Wiadomości Towarzystwa Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego* [News of the University of Lublin Association] (1927), *Problem katolicyzmu wśród Żydów* [The Problem of Catholicism among Jews] in 1930 (see the list of publications by professors of the University of Lublin in the 1931 volume of *Wiadomości Towarzystwa Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego*), *Zgubny wpływ judaizmu na duszę polską* [The Fatal Influence of Judaism on the Polish Soul] (Kruszyński, 1931), *Żydzi* [Jews] (Kruszyński, 1933), *Żydzi w Polsce przedrozbiorowej* [Jews in Pre-Partition Poland] (Kruszyński, 1934), *W sprawie żydowskiej* [Concerning the Jewish Matter] (Kruszyński, 1938a), *Żydzi a Polska* (Kruszyński, 1921e, 1938b).

29 *Nihil obstat* (Latin for "nothing stands in the way") is a declaration printed in Church publications, indicating that a given book contains nothing that would run contrary to Catholic doctrine, faith, or morals. *Imprimatur* (Latin for "let it be printed") indicates official Church approval for the printing and publication of a book.

against other religions or, to use the parlance of the day, against “sectarianism and heterodoxy,” which was “rending asunder the sacred vestments of the Catholic Church.”³⁰ Kruszyński’s lecture was in no way different from his prior anti-Jewish utterances. It was a distillation of his key views on the “Jewish peril,” Judeopolonia, international cabals of scheming Jewry, anonymous world powers, the “hateful” Talmud, the hostile nature of Judaism, separatist tendencies, threats to the Church and Christians, and the Jewish “contamination” of culture. To corroborate these notions, he cited *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Kruszyński concluded his lecture with four key takeaways:

- 1) Jews should be isolated from Christians in social, cultural, and educational settings. Efforts should also be made to encourage the establishment of private schools that would not be obliged to take in Jewish students;
- 2) universities should be pressured to introduce *numerus clausus* ethnic quotas;
- 3) Jewish publishers and press should be suppressed;
- 4) Poles should not serve in Jewish households, to avoid the evil that derives from associating with the Jews. Committees should be established to oversee this matter (Kruszyński, 1931, pp. 101–120).

The dictionary entry on Jews that Kruszyński penned for the *Encyklopedia kościelna* (Kruszyński, 1933) was divided into eight sections: “Name,” “History,” “Religion,” “Social Life,” “Art,” “Attitudes Toward Christian Peoples,” “Historiosophy,” and “Literature.” In the opening, Kruszyński explains his usage of the Jews’ many names: he calls “Hebrews” the descendants of Abraham up to the period of Babylonian captivity and explains that the term “Judeans” applies chiefly to contemporaries of Judah. Kruszyński then adds that he himself will be mostly using the term “Żydzi,” meaning “Jews,” because of its widespread contemporary use and its Roman origins (at least in his telling). The “History” section is by far the longest, as Kruszyński uses it to paint a highly detailed historical picture, from the earliest days of the Jewish people, through Babylonian captivity, the Persian and Greek eras, the times of Maccabees and Romans, the aftermath of the destruction of Jerusalem, all the way up to the diaspora. The text in this section is mostly academic in character, drawing on recorded history and Biblical studies, but is interspersed with anti-Jewish interjections, comments, and interpretations. When they appear, the impartial, academic account quickly slides into expressive invention, rich in metaphors and adjectives. Writing about the Babylonian exile, Kruszyński argues that from a religious perspective it was merely “redress for the many transgressions of the people,” and then moves on discuss clandestine Jewish organizations, associations, and the “enshrinement of hatred for everything that was not Jewish” (Kruszyński, 1933,

30 “The course was inaugurated by His Eminence the Primate. He pointed out that the spread of sectarianism is already a global phenomenon. Even the Holy Father himself despairs at how insolent Protestant proselytizing is in Rome. To make matters worse, nothing seems to indicate that this divergence from the true faith will be coming to a close anytime soon. The rise in sectarianism and heterodoxy is naturally driven by vanity and lack of religious education” (Kruszyński, 1931, p. VII).

p. 454). When discussing the Jews in Greece, he describes them as “permeated by the notion of racial exclusivity” (Kruszyński, 1933, p. 456), while his discussions of Jewish dispositions toward Christians in the Middle Ages are peppered with the author’s personal assertions, such as that Jews “loathed Christians and constantly schemed against them” (Kruszyński, 1933, p. 459). Describing their views of Arabs, he writes: “Relying on their innate cunning, the Jews exploit the Arabs for their own benefit” (Kruszyński, 1933, p. 459). Recounting the history of the diaspora in England in the times of the Crusades, he justifies the lack of popular outbursts of anti-Jewish sentiment in the kingdom by claiming that the English were simply unaware of the Jews’ nefarious influence (Kruszyński, 1933, p. 461).

Similar tonal shifts appear in the section of the entry describing contemporary religious practices of the Jews. Following an outline of the history of these practices in ancient times, the author then brings up his own treatise *Religia żydów współczesnych* [The Religion of Modern Jews] (Kruszyński, 1923c), in which he describes the “distortions” of their prayers, labels the Talmud “perverse,” and characterizes Judaism as Jewish religious nationalism (Kruszyński, 1933, p. 468). It has to be pointed out, however, that Kruszyński explicitly indicates that his interpretations of Judaism differ from those offered by Jewish authors. When discussing the Talmud, he references one of his earlier works, *Talmud co zawiera i co naucza* (Kruszyński, 1925), to paint a connection between the sacred book, which he considers “full of superstition and hatred,” and “international Jewry” brought together by “Talmudic bonds” (Kruszyński, 1933, pp. 469–470). The portion of the entry devoted to current political trends contains a brief overview of Kruszyński’s own prior theories on the designs of Jewish Zionists to establish an autonomous Jewish state in Poland, called Judeopolonia, which he saw as an existential threat to Catholics and the Polish nation. The section also contains information about Jewish groups other than the Zionists (Kruszyński, 1933, pp. 472–473). Likewise, the “Attitudes Toward Christian Peoples” and “Historiosophy” sections both contain overviews of the author’s notions first outlined in his earlier anti-Jewish publications. They feature passages describing the impulsive nature of Jews, who hate Christians, and outline how they seek to realize this hate by working to the detriment of others and coercing Christians into dissatisfaction and defensive reactions. To those interested in learning more about Judaism, Kruszyński recommends reading the fiercely antisemitic *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The historiosophical portion, which Kruszyński uses to paint a picture of Jewish revolutionaries, concludes with an assertion about the immutability of the Jewish soul, unchanged despite the continued presence of Jews alongside Christians and their entry into European culture. In this section, Kruszyński also writes about Jewish control over the press, their accumulation of massive capital, and infiltration of the highest ranks of European governments (Kruszyński, 1933, pp. 476–477). Kruszyński reiterates many of his earlier positions concerning the harmful influence of Jews and peddles a conspiracist view of world history. In the sprawling bibliography for

his entry, prominent Jewish historians such as Meir Balaban or A. G. Izaacs are listed next to authors notorious for their antisemitic writings, like Teodor Jeske-Choiński, Adam Niemojewski, and Rev. Stanisław Trzeciak (Kruszyński, 1933, pp. 477–478).

Returning once again to earlier chapters in Kruszyński's biography, it should be noted that on April 24, 1926, he was created a domestic prelate by Pope Pius XI. The petition to secure him the title was submitted to the papacy by the Chancellor of the Catholic University of Lublin. The position was to be a way of recognizing the many contributions made by Kruszyński (Stopniak, 1964, p. 16), who himself had met the future Pope Pius XI in September 1918, when the latter, back then still a papal official by the name of Achille Ratti, came to Włocławek during his apostolic visitation to Poland.

On February 27, 1930, Pope Pius XI appointed Kruszyński a protonotary apostolic, or a mitered prelate.³¹ The ceremony was held at the Włocławek Cathedral (Stopniak, 1964, p. 17). Kruszyński was granted the title thanks to the efforts of Rev. Radoński – appointed Bishop of Włocławek following the death of Bishop Krynicki – as Radoński knew that Kruszyński was seriously considered for the same position. Kruszyński's name came up again in 1934, after two bishopric appointments became vacant, but the candidacy, put forward by papal nuncio Francesco Marmaggi, was ultimately rejected by then-prime minister Leon Kozłowski (Stopniak, 1964, p. 17).

On August 24, 1931, at a session of the Episcopal Council, Kruszyński was relieved, after six years, from his responsibilities as Rector, and recognized for his contributions and efforts in service of the University. The decision came in response to a letter from Kruszyński, in which he cited his poor health (Stopniak, 1964, p. 19). In 1933, Kruszyński stepped down as Rector and subsequently resigned from all the public functions he held in Lublin (Librowski, 1975, p. 443; Rulka, 1983, pp. 221–222).

After leaving his post, Kruszyński committed himself to serious academic effort, particularly in the realm of translation. He translated from the Hebrew the Book of Jeremiah, the Lamentations, the Book of Baruch, the Pentateuch, the Books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, the First and Second Books of Samuel, the First and Second Books of Kings, the First and Second Books of Chronicles, the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, and the Book of Psalms.

Following the outbreak of the Second World War, Kruszyński was arrested by the Germans on November 11, 1939, and imprisoned in Lublin Castle (Librowski, 1975, p. 443). According to a story published in 1946 in *Wiadomości Diecezjalne Lubelskie* [Lublin Diocese News], Kruszyński was initially held in cell “17, in the middle hallway of the fourth ward...” (Bukowski, 1946, p. 415). In the first week after his arrest, the cell held around 100 detainees hailing from a variety of backgrounds, including priests, lay teaching staff from the Catholic University of Lublin, lawyers, and teachers. The next

³¹ A protonotary apostolic is a clergyman who, without being ordained a bishop, is granted by the Holy See the privilege of wearing episcopal vestments – a miter, a crozier, a gremiale, a dalmatic and tunicle, as well as episcopal gloves, stockings, and sandals – when saying Mass and during other services, see: X. A. S., 1876, p. 119.

week, the number was reduced to around 40 men. Seeking a semblance of a normal life, the detainees divided responsibilities between each other – some men organized talks, others procured food or kept the fire inside the cell going. The prisoners also followed a strict religious routine. They prayed in the mornings and evenings, said litanies around noon, sang hymns, prayed the rosary, read the breviary. Priests took confession and held talks. The aforementioned account claimed that while in prison, Kruszyński gave two lectures, *Wykopalska starochrześcijańskie* [Early Christian Archeological Sites] and *Talmud a Nowy Testament* [The Talmud and the New Testament] (Bukowski, 1946, pp. 415–416). This could suggest that Jews and Judaism were still very much in the center of his research interests. Kruszyński was released from prison on April 19, 1940. He was appointed Vicar General of the Diocese of Lublin on October 20, 1940, and served in the position until September 24, 1945.

Kruszyński refused to put his research efforts on hiatus during wartime, a fact corroborated by both his diary and the personal account of Rev. Stanisław Wachowski, in which the priest alleged that Kruszyński continued to visit the university library, then under German management, quite often. Although the Germans forbade moving items from the repositories, Polish library staff kept finding and retrieving books for him anyway. When the Germans began arranging their withdrawal in March 1944 and planned to loot the library of its most precious items, Kruszyński got word of it and asked for his own collection back, but his entreaties fell on deaf ears. Wachowski's account also suggests that Kruszyński maintained his interest in Judaism throughout the war.

[Kruszyński] also asked me to browse the section of the repository where we kept the collections from the Lublin Yeshiva (Rabbinic University), and fetch him two volumes of the Talmud. I don't remember which exactly he asked for, but I think they were volumes no. 22 and 23. He gave me a crib sheet for the Hebrew letters I should be looking for on the spines. I searched, but ultimately failed to find them. Then, Rev. Kruszyński got in touch with a repository worker, who gave him the repository key so he could come in and look for himself. He failed to find them, too. And he revealed to me that he was set on locating them because he never could get his hands on them, not even in libraries abroad (Karolewicz, 1989, pp. 24–25).

Rev. P. Pałka, a student of Kruszyński's and notary of the Episcopal Court during the war, reveals in his turn that Kruszyński took a keen interest in the Germans' destruction of libraries and even managed to secure a couple of parchment scrolls covered in Hebrew script (Karolewicz, 1989, p. 151). No further details about these scrolls have ever been determined, however. The testimony of a former student of Kruszyński's, Maria Xiężopolska-Strzeszewska, contains one highly intriguing detail, namely that before the war, Kruszyński had ties with one of the largest yeshivas in the world, the Chachmei Lublin Yeshiva, and was often invited to the school for academic debates (Karolewicz, 1989, p. 204). Unfortunately, in this case, too, no further details are known.

During the war, Józef Kruszyński witnessed the savage treatment of Jews in Lublin, he also knew of the inhumane attacks conceived by the Germans, their mass murder of the Jews, and their unspeakable cruelty. His memoirs confirm as much: "It boggles the

mind what happened here. No words could begin to describe the level of savagery the Germans sank to when they slaughtered the Jewish orphanage in Lublin” (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 231). Later on he writes:

The Jews were stripped of all their property, clad in rags, they were a wretched sight. All of the Jews, men, women and children over the age of ten, were required to wear an armband with the letter S (for Syjon [Zion]). The Germans treated them as subhumans. Whenever they came across a German, Jews had to step off the sidewalk and walk down the street. Refusal, whether deliberate or not, was met with violence. But things often turned worse. The local Germans, Gestapo officers [...] they often went into the country, where the villages were still rich in Jews (*zażydzone*), and hunted them for sport, in broad daylight, like you would a wild animal. Barkers drove the Jews from one place to another, while the vicious, bloodthirsty [...] Germans, stood on street corners or hid behind walls, so that the Jews passing them by would not see them, and gunned them down. The killing sessions were followed by orgies, the men drank and boasted about the number of Jews they had murdered. It was barbaric. Nothing could ever justify the Germans in their cruel acts. Then, before the concentration camps went into operation, the Germans began taking Jews into the forests by the truckload and murdering them there. They first started killing them in a little patch of woodland near Bełżec (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 230).

He also knew that Majdanek was the site of mass extermination of Jews:

Whenever I saw the smokestack spewing oily fumes and smelled the odor of dead bodies, a shiver always came down my spine. What a horrific sensation. We were all witnesses of what was happening in Majdanek, but knew no details. Poles were barred from entry, and those who were brought in never came out again (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 232).

On the one hand, Kruszyński forcefully asserts in his memoirs that nothing could ever justify the Germans’ actions and mentions the terrifying scope of their anti-Jewish measures and the savagery of their harassment and persecution of the Jewry. He seems particularly moved by the murder of children from the Jewish orphanage in Lublin in March 1942. Kruszyński also brings up the extermination of Jews in nearby forests, mentioning Bełżec in particular and the murder of thousands in its vicinity. Nevertheless, he fails to describe Bełżec as a site of mass extermination, where between March and December 1942 the Germans used gas chambers to murder over 435 thousand Jews, mostly from Lublin and Kraków Districts and from Galicia (Libionka, 2009, p. 67). On the other hand, however, despite all the horror, his memoir *Moje wspomnienia*, penned in his twilight years, still features the following passage: “Never have I expected Hitler to resolve the Jewish question so quickly and so radically. Although the methods he resorted to were outright barbaric and inhumane, but he indeed resolved it” (Kruszyński, 1952–1953, p. 158).

The situation of Holocaust survivors in postwar Poland was particularly difficult. Jews were met with a variety of violent reactions, typical of brutalized postwar societies, ranging from violent altercations during attempts to reclaim stolen property, through acts of vicious banditry, all the way to pogroms. Jews sought succor from Catholic hierarchs. In early 1945, a committee set up by Lublin Jews approached

Rev. Kruszyński to ask him to publicly denounce antisemitic acts and sentiments. He refused and recommended that they first reach out to the Episcopal Conference or the Metropolitan Bishop of Kraków, as he himself could not possibly make such a decision before his superiors and, furthermore, he saw no need to. If, however, the Episcopate were to produce such a document, he would comply and disseminate it across his diocese. Commenting on the meeting, Kruszyński later added that he considered these sorts of entreaties “pushy,” and labeled the repeated visits of Jewish Committee (Komitet Żydów Lubelskich) member Emil Sommerstein “harassment” (Libionka, 2008, p. 6).³²

Dariusz Libionka offers a fitting diagnosis of Kruszyński’s attitude: “Despite his proclaimed sympathy for the Jews, his position remained essentially unchanged, an argument corroborated by his sarcastic comments” (Libionka, 2009, p. 67). Libionka is equally scathing in his critique of Kruszyński’s displeased reaction to the aforementioned visit of Jewish Committee representatives in early 1945, who pleaded with him to publicly decry the growing antisemitic sentiment:

The heart of the problem lies elsewhere: like many of his fellow high-ranking Church officials, Kruszyński was not interested in divining the real reasons why the Jews sought the help of someone like him. Even anti-Jewish ideologues like Kruszyński failed to recognize the relationship between Church teachings and the antisemitic undercurrent that ran through postwar Poland. The instrumental treatment of Jews was rooted in centuries of prejudice and alienation, which not even the Nazi genocide could cut through (Libionka, 2008, p. 6).³³

Jews hoped that the Church could promise them a measure of security and help curtail anti-Jewish attacks. To that end, Jewish communities continued to meet with Church hierarchs, but the meetings failed to produce the desired outcomes (Szaynok, 2009, pp. 128–148).

After the war, on June 25, 1945, Kruszyński was named honorary professor of the Catholic University of Lublin. Already 68 years old at the time, Kruszyński refused to return to teaching (Stopniak, 1964, p. 25), and went back to Włocławek that fall, where he “was appointed prelate scholasticus of the Cathedral Chapter and an official of the Ecclesiastical Court in Włocławek. He also taught Bible studies at the Higher Theological Seminary. Kruszyński later took on as curator, that is the parish priest of a non-recognized parish, and then became the parish priest and Chapter delegate after it was eventually erected in 1947” (Librowski, 1975, p. 443). Also in 1947, Kruszyński was made a Synodal Examiner, and in 1948 he temporarily took over as Vicar General of the Diocese of Włocławek (Librowski, 1975, p. 443).

Józef Kruszyński died on August 10, 1953, in Włocławek.

32 Libionka writes: “Emil Sommerstein was a deputy to the Polish Sejm before the war, representing the general Zionist party. Later on, he was sent to a Soviet labor camp and then released for propaganda purposes and coerced into joining the Polish Committee of National Liberation (Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego, PKWN). Elected president of the Central Committee of Polish Jews (Centralny Komitet Żydów Polskich) formed in Lublin” (Libionka, 2008, p. 6; 2019, p. 135).

33 For a broader take, see: Szaynok, 2009, pp. 128–148; 2012, pp. 553–581.

Jews and Judaism in Rev. Józef Kruszyński's "Judeological" Writings

In key profiles of Rev. Józef Kruszyński – be it biographical sketches, articles, or brief notes – his studies of Jews and Judaism are usually framed either neutrally or negatively. The phraseology used includes terms such as “Judeology,” “works related to Israelis and their religion,” as well as “anti-Jewish” and “antisemitic.” To alleviate the negative connotations, some authors instead chose the term “polemical works.” For example, in an essay on the theological and academic accomplishments of the Higher Theological Seminary in Włocławek, featured in a 1969 issue of *Ateneum Kapłańskie*, the section on Bible studies includes the following remark: “Rev. Kruszyński wrote and edited a number of publications in the field of Talmudic and Judaism studies” (Dudek, 1969, p. 286). A footnote to the text lists all of Kruszyński's writings released under the “From the Field of Judeology” (“Z Dziedziny Żydoznawstwa”) series. Likewise, the 1996 volume *Nauczyciele akademicki Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego w okresie międzywojennym* [Teaching Staff of the Catholic University of Lublin in the Interwar Period] includes a chapter listing the academic achievements of the Faculty of Theology, which features the following statement about Kruszyński: “Throughout his Lublin period, he authored over 70 publications. Most of these continued his prior efforts, focused mainly on subjects related with the Israeli people and their religion, others dealt with the comparative study of religion” (Karolewicz, 1996, p. 165). The footnote to this passage cites two of his works from the “From the Field of Judeology” series: *Żydzi a świat chrześcijański* [Jews and the Christian World] (Włocławek 1924) and *Talmud co zawiera i co naucza* (Lublin 1925).

In his biographical profile of Rev. Kruszyński, Rev. Stanisław Librowski also mentioned that Kruszyński prolifically penned nationalist and antisemitic literature, and brought up the Episcopate's injunction that barred Kruszyński from further political activity, especially antisemitic, following his appointment as Rector of the Catholic University of Lublin (Librowski, 1975, pp. 442–443). However, in the article “Spuścizna rektora Józefa Kruszyńskiego jako źródło do historii Uniwersytetu” [The Legacy of Józef Kruszyński as Source for the History of the University], featured in the book *Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski: Wybrane zagadnienia z dziejów uczelni* [Selected Aspects of the History of the Catholic University of Lublin], Librowski writes:

I sought to publish Kruszyński's memoirs in print, but eventually abandoned the idea. The reason was twofold. First, while a skilled writer, he wrote his memoirs without any editing, and preparing them for publication would require extensive rewrites. Such a book, however, could barely be considered Kruszyński's. Second, Kruszyński's historiosophy saw Poland forever threatened by her eternal enemies to the west and east, and by Jews, the internal enemy. Consequently, publishing the memoirs in Poland in their entirety was out of the question, while releasing them abroad would probably leave them misunderstood (Librowski, 1992, p. 388).

Another biographical profile of Kruszyński was compiled by Rev. Kazimierz Rulka (Rulka, 1983, pp. 215–222). While this sketch itself mentions neither the more prurient of his writings nor his public activities, Rulka nevertheless explores these issues at length in his article “Ksiądz Józef Kruszyński – włocławski antysemita?” [Rev. Józef Kruszyński – an Antisemite from Włocławek?], published in *Zapiski Kujawsko-Dobrzyńskie* [Kujawy-Dobrzyń Record], which probes the scope of Kruszyński’s Jew- and Judaism-focused writings and those of his activities that Rulka believes were anti-Jewish (Rulka, 2000, pp. 185–190). In conclusion, however, Rulka argues that Kruszyński was not an ardent antisemite, but merely repeated accusations cast elsewhere. He ends his article with a rhetorical question: “Was Kruszyński an antisemite or simply a polemicist with a pronounced anti-Jewish slant?” (Rulka, 2000, p. 190), and eventually settles on the latter as being the more appropriate descriptor.

The writings and public stance of Józef Kruszyński have also been explored by Michał Śliwa, author of the chapter “Przestrogi ks. Józefa Kruszyńskiego przed ‘Judeopolonią’” [Rev. Józef Kruszyński’s Warnings Against the “Judeopolonia”] published in the anthology *Obcy czy swoi: Z dziejów poglądów na kwestię żydowską w Polsce w XIX i XX wieku* [Aliens and Locals: Historical Views of the Jewish Question in Poland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries] (Śliwa, 1997). In his essay, Śliwa offers a synthetic review of the main threads running through the “From the Field of Judeology” series, with a special emphasis on the question of the alleged danger that Jews and Judaism posed to Poland. Concluding the study, Śliwa writes:

Rev. Józef Kruszyński advanced typical antisemitic tropes about the role of Jews in Polish society and the impact of the Jewish question on the fate and history of Poland. His understanding of the issue fell outside the conventions and practice accepted in the democratic stream of Polish social thought. Indeed, it was against the grain of dominant, established approaches that he suggested embracing an ultimate, deleterious, ideologically charged solution to the Jewish question. [...] More than any other protagonist of anti-Jewishness, he emphasized the consistency among the Jews in terms of their religious and political objectives. He stressed their foreign nature and their enmity toward Poland and saw these characteristics as innate and indelible. In explanations of his stereotypical view of the Jews as omnipotent pests bent on undermining the fundamentally Christian Polish character, he relied on demagoguery and drew extensively on conspiracy theories to inform his interpretation of Jewish history and Polish-Jewish relations (Śliwa, 1997, p. 123).

In Śliwa’s reading, Kruszyński’s works repeated and lent further credence to popular antisemitic and nationalist clichés. A similar interpretation, which saw Kruszyński’s writings, public statements, and activities as unequivocally antisemitic, was suggested by Dariusz Libionka (Libionka, 1999, 2008, 2009).

Within Kruszyński’s broad body of work, most of which was made up by treatises on the Bible and original translations (including his translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Polish), his anti-Jewish writings, collected in the “From the Field of Judeology” series, comprised a separate, highly distinct branch. Some of the titles in the series include: *Żydzi i kwestia żydowska* (Kruszyński, 1920), *Dążenia Żydów w dobie obec-*

nej [Contemporary Ambitions of the Jews] (Kruszyński, 1921a), *Polityka żydowska* (Kruszyński, 1921c), *Żydzi a Polska* (Kruszyński, 1921e), *Niebezpieczeństwo żydowskie* [The Jewish Peril] (Kruszyński, 1923b), *Religia żydów współczesnych* [The Religion of Modern Jews] (Kruszyński, 1923c), *Rola światowa żydostwa* [The International Role of the Jewry] (Kruszyński, 1923d), *Dlaczego występuję przeciwko Żydom?* (Kruszyński, 1923a), *Antysemityzm – antyjudajizm – antygoizm* [Anti-Semitism, Anti-Judaism, Anti-Goyism] (1924a), *Żydzi a świat chrześcijański* (Kruszyński, 1924b), and *Talmud co zawiera i co naucza* (Kruszyński, 1925). Reading these works in chronological order reveals Kruszyński's growing radicalism and a pronounced shift toward an ever more clichéd understanding of the issues related to Jews and Judaism in Poland, as well as a number of recurring motifs and themes that Kruszyński frequently retreaded throughout his writing years.

The writings comprising the aforementioned series are characterized by radically anti-Jewish rhetoric, including Kruszyński's assertions that the enmity of all Jewry toward the Polish state is a widely acknowledged fact, and that the public ought to be informed of said enmity's extent or else Poland would not be able to preserve her independence, which the Jews sought to subvert. In the series, Kruszyński promotes a simplistic vision of Jewish history, Judaism, and politics, further deformed by anti-Jewish comments and interpretation. His is a fully developed, conspiratorial antisemitism. Authors of this sort of texts typically stop seeking evidence to corroborate their claims, instead citing historical and political "facts" that lack verifiability or any sort of credible sources, and Kruszyński is no different, although at times he does make references to right-wing newspapers. Most of these works rely heavily on negatively charged, highly expressive vocabulary, and Kruszyński often resorts to metaphors in order to better illustrate his points.

The most ideology-laden of Kruszyński's writings, such as *Polityka żydowska* (Kruszyński 1921c), *Żydzi a Polska* (Kruszyński, 1921e), *Niebezpieczeństwo żydowskie* (Kruszyński, 1923b), *Żydzi a świat chrześcijański* (Kruszyński, 1924b), are characterized by frequent deployment of specific linguistic devices and tropes endemic to antisemitic literature. Rather than use the word "Jew," antisemitic authors often employ periphrases, collocated with negatively charged adjectives and verbs, often ones associated with violence. They also make extensive use of set phrases featuring the adjective "Jewish" that are typical of their propaganda tracts. Kruszyński, for his part, employs the following linguistic devices:

- periphrases used *in lieu* of the word "Jew": dense mass; fanatical crowds; malignant tribe deserving its own destruction; contemptible people; different race; enthusiasts; element; tarnished, fanatical masses; anonymous world power; hidden hand; cosmopolitan mafia; secret organization;
- characteristic descriptive adjectives, forming labels: fanatical Jew; unpredictable; impulsive; short-sighted; hostile; with a sweeping, unbridled temperament; restless; prying;

- characteristic phrasemes: Jewish politics, Jewish flood, Jewish soul, Jewish masses, Jewish peril, Jewish nature, Jewish question, Jewish hands, Jewish hatred, Jewish mafia, Jewish ambitions, Jewish psyche, Jewish machinations, Jewish voice, Jewish victories, Jewish element, Jewish arrogance;

- specific phraseology: they have little regard for anyone else, they bring misfortune upon themselves, they exploit, press ahead, manufacture conflict, hate, undermine, they oppress, persecute, hold in contempt, they sever sacred ties, they grow rich, they conceal, they absorb hatred, they are brought up in hate and prejudice, they dissimulate (cloak themselves in dissimulation), blend, yell, propagandize for the enemy, seek to establish a new order, have only one objective, implement their plans, they cause harm to Poland, conceal their plans and objectives, slander, seek to overcome, insert themselves, deprave, demoralize, spread atheism, they disturb the peace, corrupt, engage in sabotage;

- a number of derogatory terms for the Jew: slave, wanderer, materialist, viper, Bolshevik, *żydostwo* (collective plural: Yids).

Kruszyński's *Religia żydów współczesnych* (Kruszyński, 1923c) is one of his many politically-involved works to take up the subject of Judaism. In the disquisition, the author strives to prove the Jews' animosity toward Poles and Poland by framing hostility and aggression as typically Jewish traits throughout history. In the pamphlet's closing line, Kruszyński asserts that the most important task facing Poland after regaining independence is "solving the Jewish question." The goal of the treatise itself, on the other hand, is laid out in the introduction: it seeks to "straighten out" the prevailing view that modern Jews continue to observe Old Testament practices, and outline the specific norms driving Jewish behaviors, in order to help readers better understand Jewish conduct toward Poland and "all other Christian nations." The book is a very peculiar blend of matter-of-fact lecture and ideology-laden justifications for antisemitism. In between purely instructive chapters, dealing with the structure of the Talmud or offering descriptions of Jewish holidays, the author inserts lengthy antisemitic excursions purporting to shed light on the "Jewish soul" and a range of political issues. He paints the history of Jews and Judaism from the times of Christ all the way through to the modern era as an unbroken chain of departures from the faith and transgressions against the rest of mankind, which their fellow men justifiably punish with persecution and proscription. In a rather absurd twist, this particular interpretation leads Kruszyński to consistently side with those who sought to oppress the Jews, even if that means affirming the actions of Roman emperors, infamous for their barbaric treatment of early Christians. The book also features a description of the Talmud, at once factual and rife with anti-Jewish commentary. For example, in the chapter "Przykazania Boskie w oświeceniu Talmudu" [Divine Commandments in Light of the Talmud], Kruszyński discusses the Decalogue, drawing on *Dusza żydowska w zwierciadle Talmudu* [The Jewish Soul as Reflected by the Talmud], the antisemitic screed penned in 1914 by essayist and poet Andrzej Niemojewski, which Marcin Wodziński called the "Bible of interwar antisemitism" (Wodziński,

2004, p. 211). Later on, he describes the methods of disregarding or disobeying religious prescriptions allegedly derived by the Jews from prescriptions outlined in the Talmud, listing examples of their accepting feigned baptism, disobeying the laws of the Sabbath, breaching oaths, and committing acts of deception and even murder. Twisting the meaning and widespread interpretation of Jewish laws, Kruszyński completely distorts the fundamental precepts of Judaism and ignores the efforts made by observant Jews to follow Jewish laws as best as possible and practice the *mitzvot* in their everyday lives to sanctify life itself and the name of the Lord. The theologian advanced a view of Judaism as a pseudo-religious or anti-religious system, rooted on behavior antithetical to the Ten Commandments, which, thus, formed a sort of anti-Decalogue saying: “kill,” “desecrate,” “desire,” “deceive,” “steal,” “lust.” And the source on which he drew most heavily while formulating this particular concept were the writings of the aforementioned notorious antisemite Niemojewski.³⁴ Kruszyński also brings up Niemojewski’s claim that where “Aryan peoples” were naturally law-abiding, the “Talmudic Jews” naturally gravitated toward depravity. In a similar vein, he analyzes a number of Jewish prayers to expose them as aggressively chauvinistic and anti-Christian.

A chapter from *Religia żydów społecznych* that is essential to retracing Kruszyński’s thinking is “Antisemitism”; aside from a brief outline of the history of antisemitism (seen therein as a valid reaction to the rise of Jewish chauvinism), the chapter also features the following passage:

34 Andrzej Niemojewski (1864–1921) was a prolific poet, essayist, social activist, theatre reporter, press correspondent, novella author, political activist, and editor of the journal *Myśl Niepodległa*; although a socialist in his early years, his political views later shifted and brought him closer to National Democracy. He was a very productive writer: aside from his own works, he also published translations and historical sketches (see biographical note in: Piber & Stankiewicz, 1978, pp. 3–10). In 1914, Niemojewski penned *Książd Pranajtis i jego przeciwnicy* [Reverend Pranajtis and His Detractors] (cf. Kumor, 1983, p. 438). He had a very broad range of interests, including religion and astrology (“astralism”), which often brought him into conflict with the Church (as did his critiques of Bible scholars and of Rev. Stanisław Trzeciak). In 1907, he translated and published Friedrich Delitzsch’s *Babel and Bible*, about the links of Judaism and the Bible with Babylonian beliefs. Influenced by Panbabylonism and the historical-critical school interpretation of early Christianity, he published: *O pochodzeniu naszego Boga* [On the Origins of Our God] (1907), *Dwa drzewa biblijne: Drzewo wiadomości złego i dobrego i drzewo wiecznego żywota* [The Two Biblical Trees: The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Eternal Life] (1908), *Dzieje krzyża* [History of the Cross] (1908), and *Stworzenie świata według Biblii* [The Creation of the World According to the Bible] (1909). His astralist interpretation of the Gospel was published in *Bóg Jezus w świetle badań cudzych i własnych* [God Jesus in Light of Published and Original Research] (1909). He developed the notions underpinning the mythological-astralist school, which claimed that the biography of Jesus outlined in the Gospels was an astral myth, encoded in the Gospels’ textual layer. Niemojewski was also the driving force behind the Polish school of astralist Biblical stylometry. His final book in the field was *Biblia a gwiazdy* [The Bible and the Stars] (1924).

In 1908, he begins speaking publicly against Judaism, criticizing it in writing and denouncing the harmful influence of Jews on Polish economy, society, and public ethics. Kruszyński usually draws from two of his works: *Dusza żydowska w zwierciadle Talmudu* (1914) and *Prawo żydowskie o gojach* [Jewish Law on the Goyim] (1918). Niemojewski saw his strain of antisemitism as “progressive” and sought to build an ideological framework to support it. His antisemitic campaigns, which he conducted in a number of press titles, including *Myśl Niepodległa*, were supported by Rev. Julian Unslicht, but met with withering criticism from fellow intellectuals – some of whom had much sympathy and respect for him before – such as Jan Baudouin de Courtenay, as well as socialists (who previously defended him from the Polish clergy’s attacks on his freethinking ways), and German social democrats (see: Piber & Stankiewicz, 1978, p. 9).

Like the Prophet Jonah, devoured by a sea creature after he failed to heed the voice of God and fulfill his mission, so are Jews, unwilling to embrace their historic destiny, doomed to eternal wandering and persecution (Kruszyński, 1923c, p. 53).

Another interesting example of Kruszyński following this twisted logic and arriving at bizarre conclusions can be found in his decision to call upon the Biblical pharaohs and the vizier Haman as experts on the “Jewish question” (Kruszyński, 1923c, pp. 53–54). Kruszyński later concludes his argument with a famous passage from the Bible: “I will deliver them to trouble into all the kingdoms of the earth, for their harm, to be a reproach and a byword, a taunt and a curse, in all places where I shall drive them (Jer 24:9)” (Kruszyński, 1923c, p. 64).

In *Religia żydów społecznych*, Kruszyński does not dwell on “international Jewish conspiracies,” but instead insinuates that Jews are morally, religiously, and socially aberrant, primarily due to their rejection of the teachings of Jesus Christ. In his “Judeological” works, he paints Judaism as a pseudo-religion, a false religion, a political ideology, and a system that enshrines hatred as its supreme value. In his interpretation, Judaism is a “religious nationality,” “a sect,” “a hateful social entity,” and a “formalism.” To Kruszyński, Judaism is an anti-religion with anti-values.

Another of his pseudoscientific treatises, *Rola światowa żydostwa* (Kruszyński, 1923d) is a blend of Biblical hermeneutics and historical, theosophical, and ideological inquiry. Kruszyński himself also argued that the book drew, to some extent, on historiosophy (Kruszyński, 1923d, p. 6). While the piece has little academic merit and bears all the hallmarks of a propaganda diatribe, it should be noted that it does use its considerable length to impart as much information about Jewish history to readers as possible. However, the historical, religious, and political facts presented therein are cherry-picked and interpreted in such a way as to support the core argument that Jews are a threat to the entire world, including its Christian realms. The treatise continues Kruszyński’s efforts to paint a negative picture of Jewish involvement in world history – with particular emphasis placed on the adverse impact of the Jews’ alleged conspiracies on non-Jewish peoples – by compiling a variety of negative stereotypes and derogatory interpretations regarding Jews, their history, and their religion. One chapter consists solely of passages denouncing and censuring Jews penned by major figures from the fields of culture, science, and politics, further emphasizing Kruszyński’s desire to find as broad an audience as possible for his anti-Jewish jeremiads. In the book’s conclusion, finally, the author lists a number of potential approaches to “solving the Jewish question.”

The first instance of Kruszyński explicitly citing *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* can be found in *Dlaczego występuję przeciwko Żydom?* (Kruszyński, 1923a). In the book, the author expresses a need to convince his readers of the significance of its contents and his authority in these matters. Unlike in his prior works, Kruszyński thus includes in the

book's introduction a brief personal profile and an outline of his academic credentials, wherein he describes himself as a scholar of the Bible, an expert on Hebrew, and a professor at a theological seminary – a list intended to emphasize his position in academia and the Church hierarchy. Afterward, he informs the reader of his erstwhile research plans to investigate three separate issues: 1) why Jews have strayed so far from the faith of their ancestors despite using the same sacred texts; 2) why Jews have rejected the teaching of Christ; 3) why Jews always seek to bring ruin to the peoples they live among. He quickly adds, however, that he ultimately abandoned the idea after deciding that raising public awareness of the “Jewish question” and the peril the Jews posed to Poles and Christians was a much more pressing matter (Kruszyński, 1923a, p. 12).

In the book, Kruszyński repeats his earlier claims of Jewish hostility toward Poland and conspiracies aiming to sabotage her. He does so using typical propaganda language, drawing on a variety of anti-Jewish tropes and stereotypes, and citing the *Protocols* to lend credence to these assertions. He also dedicates much of the book to Polish parliamentary elections of 1922, during which ethnic minorities in Poland came together to form the Minority Bloc (Blok Mniejszościowy), an entity Kruszyński bears much animosity toward, primarily due to the fact that it involved Jews reaching an understanding with the Germans – a compromise that, he argued, was proof of his pre-existing beliefs about the Jews' pro-German inclinations. Later in the book, Kruszyński even calls the Bloc Poland's “internal enemy.” Unlike his previous publications, the book went much further in explicitly calling Poles to action:

It is high time to raise the alarm. We must wake the sleepers, reveal to the indifferent the extent of the peril before them. We must call on those who close their ears to our teachings to show them the precipice they are pushed toward. We must open the eyes of the masses, unaware that they're pushed out of their homes and into penury, until they are ready to be purged. We must raise armies to come to our rescue, while we still have the means to do so. *Periculum in mora* – the danger is imminent. Time to defend ourselves! (Kruszyński, 1923a, p. 24)

The book is heavy on exclamatory expressions and lofty, uplifting cries, particularly near the end: “Hear me, o Poles!,” “the shackles of bondage,” “Poland is us and them,” “And so stand upon the ramparts, ready to fight for our ‘to be or not to be.’”

In the pamphlet *Niebezpieczeństwo żydowskie* (Kruszyński, 1923b), Kruszyński introduces a new conspiracy theory, alleging that the pro-Polish attitudes demonstrated by Poland's Jewish minority and Jewish political parties are a carefully constructed sham. The theologian charges himself with discussing another aspect of the “Jewish peril,” namely the “conquest of our spirit through culture, assimilated at an astonishing rate by all of Jewry” (Kruszyński, 1923b, p. 7). In his view, the pro-state attitudes of the Jews only demonstrate their innate shrewdness and cynicism. But what constitutes the eponymous “Jewish peril”? In Kruszyński's telling, the Jews of Poland are only lurking, “like vipers,” behind their masks of normalcy, lying in wait to take over key government and

administrative positions and replace ethnically Polish intellectuals with their own, who, Kruszyński alleges, could then manipulate the Polish souls, spread rot, and sabotage the state from within. To counter this existential danger, Kruszyński suggests embracing cultural warfare by means of total isolation of the Jews. He calls on the authorities to introduce *numerus clausus* ethnic quotas and completely separate Jewish and Christian youth. According to Kruszyński, the assimilation of Jews into the predominantly Catholic Polish society is merely a feint, and yet another proof of a far-reaching Jewish conspiracy. He further claims that by fast becoming well-cultured, well-mannered, and well-dressed, the Jews are deceiving the Polish people, who, going solely by appearances, allow themselves to fall under Jewish influence. With no small measure of horror, the author observes the emergence of mixed marriages, which he ascribes to “Jewish women no longer causing repulsion.” Kruszyński sees these efforts, naturally, as part of a broader campaign of assimilation, pursued in order to infiltrate government and subvert Christianity, and relies on terms such as “Aryan,” “non-Aryan,” or “anti-Aryan” to support his explications. Because Kruszyński interprets all Jewish efforts toward education and assimilation as a ruse that must be countered at all costs, he sees isolation, for example in ghettos, as a legitimate avenue of curbing the threat posed by the Jews. Kruszyński also suggests limiting the Jews’ ability to learn Polish fluently. Ultimately, however, he thinks that the only permanent solution is to expel the Jews from the country – an effort that must be pursued by all means available.

In a separate portion of the pamphlet, Kruszyński outlines a comprehensive plan for combating Jewish influence and advances the notion of “practical antisemitism,” which he envisions as stripping the Jews of any means of economic survival by having entire industries, professions, and geographic areas purged of Jews. In this context, Kruszyński views the nationalist slogan of “Locals buy local from locals” as particularly valid. Additionally, in the realm of culture, the theologian suggests renewed commitment to raising children in the spirit of nationalism and embracing the struggle against “harmful” literature, press titles, films, etc. – penetrated as they are by “Jewish influence.” Kruszyński places particular emphasis on combating pornography, which he sees as a Jewish invention, “an insidious instrument” used to spread degeneration in Christian societies.

Another common thread running through this and other publications by Kruszyński is the author’s concerns over the situation in Russia, where, in his opinion, the impending collapse of Bolshevism is set to trigger a mass exodus of Jews fearing bloody reprisals from the rightfully angry Russian people, which could, in turn, lead to the establishment of “Neojudea” in Poland. The pamphlet closes with a call to action: “Polish lands and cities for Poles only! This is the banner under which our struggle must proceed today” (Kruszyński, 1923b, p. 93).

In another short pamphlet, *Antysemityzm – antyjudajzm – antygoizm* (Kruszyński, 1924a), Kruszyński narrows down his definition of antisemitism while introducing an-

other concept he devised: “anti-goyism.” At the core of the argument underpinning the pamphlet sits the assertion that there actually is no such thing as antisemitism, because no one has persecuted the Jews for their ethnic identity, and that the true reason for the spread of antisemitism lies elsewhere, namely in the establishment of the Jewish Zionist movement. Later on, Kruszyński contends that all the contemporary backlash leveled by Christian communities against the “Jews’ hostile bearing” should be labeled “modern antisemitism,” and goes on to assert that antisemitism can essentially be viewed as deriving from resistance to comprehensive and concerted efforts undertaken by Jews against other nations and Christianity itself. Continuing this argument, he claims that the term “anti-Judaism” reflects the situation much better than “antisemitism,” as it is Judaism that drives much of the conflict between Jews and the rest of the world. Kruszyński then adds that “anti-goyism” is even more apt, because hatred of the Gentiles and all things non-Jewish is supposedly an inherent part of the Talmud, so it could be argued that “anti-goyism is the very source of anti-Judaism” (Kruszyński, 1924a, p. 22). And it is from this Jewish hostility, Kruszyński alleges, that all the problems and conflicts subsequently derive. The theologian concludes his argument by saying that anti-Judaism, commonly referred to as antisemitism, is fast gaining acceptance and supporters across the continent: “A great wave of anti-Judaism is approaching and it is poised to make an indelible mark on the twentieth century in terms of purging Christian nations and peoples of Jews” (Kruszyński, 1924a, p. 22).

In his publications, Kruszyński sought to prove that the two key features of Talmudic Judaism were its hatred of Christians and Christianity and its strong nationalist undercurrents, advocating for Jews to establish themselves as a wholly separate national and religious community. In *Żydzi a świat chrześcijański* (Kruszyński, 1924b), he argues that the authors of the Talmud elevated hatred “to the level of moral perfection,” as Jews, by way of their “hateful” interpretation of the Old Testament, “introduced hatred as an obligation for believers” in order to destroy Christianity (Kruszyński, 1924b, p. 12). Aside from strict maintenance of “racial” and religious separateness, Kruszyński explains, Jews believe that the other precondition for the coming of the Messiah is combating Christianity by all means available. He argues that the Talmud is a danger to nations and peoples the Jews live amongst, because those Jews who have found themselves under the influence of its nationalist and anti-Christian teachings necessarily make for poor citizens, who eagerly engage in corruption, misconduct, and criminal activity, all the while shirking their civic obligation. In the pamphlet, the theologian also identifies the following “dogmas” of the Talmud, which allegedly prove that Judaism and the Talmud are an existential threat to individual Christians as well as entire Christian nations: 1) only the Jewish people have been chosen by God; 2) other peoples are utterly contemptible and deserve nothing but hatred; 3) consequently, all property belongs to the Jews; 4) Jews, therefore, are not bound by any laws in their quest to seize ever more property; 5) and in their war against Christianity (Kruszyński, 1924b, p. 24).

At times, Kruszyński explicitly calls his readers to action against the Jews, framing the world as a battlefield on which two realms are locked in an existential struggle: the spiritual realm of Christianity, rooted in love, and the material realm of Talmudism, rooted in hatred. The former is represented by the disciples of Christ, who must struggle against the agents of the latter, the disciples of Satan. After seizing control of Russia (through Bolshevism) and the United States (by steering its public opinion), “Talmudic Jews,” eternally scheming, continue with their plan to dominate the world economically and culturally. Kruszyński also alleges that the Jews’ future plans revolve around Poland, where they intend to establish Judeopolonia, the New Judea. Led by their “Talmudic hatred,” secure against outside influence, and immune even to the baptism, the Jews are, in Kruszyński’s interpretation, single-mindedly set on bringing about their ultimate destiny: the establishment of an international kingdom that would allow them to accomplish the supreme religious objectives of all Jews – prompt the coming of the (false) Messiah, the Antichrist. Kruszyński details the alleged plan across 93 pages, often drawing on *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to corroborate his claims.

From a linguistic standpoint, the brochure reads like a combative exposé, relying heavily on phrases such as “Jewish mafia,” “anonymous world power,” “the invisible hand,” and listing “examples” that presumably prove the extent of Jewish infiltration and scheming, e.g. “decoded” names of prominent politicians followed by their “true” Jewish identities, rumors that Lenin’s family spoke Yiddish at home, etc. The pamphlet also brings up a bevy of antisemitic canards, including their purported acts of ritual murder, which, in the context of his belief in the Satanic origins of “Talmudic” Judaism, Kruszyński sees as highly probable. The author does not believe in any sort of conciliation with the Jews and concludes his book by calling on Poles to start defending themselves and resist the “Jewish flood.” Christian nations, he argues, must unite in the struggle against the well-organized and cunning enemy, while Poles should make “Polish lands and cities for Poles only!” their rallying cry.

The final installment in his “Judeological” series, and the only longer publication of his dedicated to the Talmud, is Kruszyński’s *Talmud co zawiera i co naucza* (Kruszyński, 1925). A brochure intended to raise public awareness rather than an academic treatise, it still served as a key resource for other theologians and Catholic writers. Kruszyński already penned a brief outline of the history of the Talmud in *Religia żydów społecznych* (Kruszyński, 1923c, pp. 29–32). The 1925 brochure was an attempt at introducing readers to the author’s view on the Talmud’s history, structure, and contents. The theologian calls the Talmud a key source of insight into the “Jewish character,” first and foremost because it connects all the Jews irrespective of whether they are observant or not; second of all, Kruszyński sees it as responsible for the shaping of the enduring “Jewish personality” and defining the Jews’ personal and national objectives. This, in turn, leads Kruszyński to describe the Talmud as the almanac of Jewish upbringing, a source of spiritual sustenance and the ethnic ties binding Jews together. He writes of the power

of the Talmud to feed Jewish ambitions, superstitions, fanaticism, and loathing, at the same time claiming his utmost objectivity in the matter already in the introduction: “I wrote this pamphlet without the slightest trace of bias or antipathy” (Kruszyński, 1925, p. 7). While Kruszyński does indeed transcend in this brochure, to some extent at least, the framework of talking about the Talmud using tropes and popular stereotypes, and genuinely attempts to introduce his readers to its particulars, his factual rundown is nevertheless interspersed with negative and sarcastic antisemitic comments.

Talmud co zawiera i co naucza has some informational value and does communicate the contemporary state of knowledge about the development of the Talmud, it discusses individual stages of the process of compiling the texts that comprise it, its methods of presentation, and describes key rabbinic centers. The brief chapters, each only a few pages long, called “Talmud,” “Mishnah,” “Midrash,” “Halakhah,” “Aggadah,” and “Kabbalah,” have been penned with relative impartiality; all of the chapters, however, are peppered with offensive commentary. For example, Kruszyński concludes a detailed, multipage explanation of the orders of the Mishnah with the comment: “Here are the contents of the Mishnah. When this senseless book was published and for what reason...” (Kruszyński, 1925, p. 23), and then, without missing a beat, returns to unbiased, factual analysis; in the chapter on the Midrash, Kruszyński writes that the Pardes³⁵ interpretive approach (“paradis” in his spelling) has produced “fantastical conclusions and utter nonsense” (Kruszyński, 1925, p. 30); in the chapter on the Halakhah, meanwhile, the author cites passages from the Gospels to expose the alleged hypocrisy, perversity, and burden of Mosaic laws, as well as the blindness of those keeping them (Kruszyński, 1925, pp. 35–37).

Although some of it was impartial, the primary goal of the pamphlet was to expose “Jewish secrets” and portray the Talmud as the source of Jewish hatred, fanaticism, revolution, and Bolshevik terror. The author sought to prove that connection particularly hard in the final part of the book, in the chapters “Meaning of the Talmud in the Life of the Jews” (Kruszyński, 1925, pp. 39–51) and “Purpose of the Talmud” (Kruszyński, 1925, pp. 52–59). There, an unbiased description of the Talmud and Kabbalist tradition are contrasted with accusatory comments.

Paradoxically, the analytical portion of his disquisition does not seem to support the conclusions he draws, ultimately leaving Kruszyński unable to corroborate his own claims about the evils of the Talmud and seemingly aware of the irreconcilability of the two positions. Kruszyński sees the diabolical underpinnings of the Talmud as embodied by the mysterious understatements, interpretations, and riddles that can be found in

35 Pardes (Hebrew from the Persian *pairidaeza*, meaning fenced-in patch of land; *paradeisos* in Greek, meaning “park; Garden of Eden, paradise” *paradisus* in Latin). From the Middle Ages onward, scholars have been using the acronym PaRDeS (from the Hebrew letters *pe, resh, dalet, samekh*), formed from the initials of the four approaches to Biblical exegesis: *Peshat* – which examined the literal, surface meaning; *Remez* – which sought symbolic and allegoric meanings; *Derash* – which employed homiletic interpretations; *Sod* – which sought esoteric meanings. See: Borzumińska & Żebrowski, 2003, p. 291.

the portions of the text unavailable to the average, uninitiated reader. Thus his call for the Talmud to be translated into Polish and authorized, so that everyone could finally see what it actually contains and speaks of. However, Kruszyński argues, only a thorough, exhaustive translation could facilitate the comprehensive exposure and denouncement of the Jews, and such a translation could not be compiled by anyone else than the Jews themselves. The very fact that such a translation has not yet been prepared is, in Kruszyński's view, just further proof of the Jews' dishonesty. Awareness of his own inconsistency does not stop him, however, from launching further defamatory attacks on the adherents of Judaism: "The fiercest efforts of its most ardent supporters will not be able to wash the filth off the cloak the Talmud is wrapped in" (Kruszyński, 1925, p. 66). In the end, Kruszyński arrives at the following conclusion: "Our inquiry into the Talmud clearly reveals that the expectations of Jewish assimilation harbored by Christianity are nothing short of utopian" (Kruszyński, 1925, p. 66), and declares that the only solution he considers feasible is the expulsion of all Jews from Poland, followed by forced assimilation of those unable to leave so that the "Talmudic bond" is completely severed (Kruszyński, 1925, p. 66).

While most of Kruszyński's works, even those falling outside the scope of Bible studies, for instance *Studja nad porównawczą historją religii* [An Inquiry into the Comparative History of Religion] (Kruszyński, 1926b), maintain a high level of academic and scientific rigor that attests to his skill as a scholar, erudition, and insight, none of this can be said about any of his "Judeological" works. Kruszyński's journalistic output is an excellent example of how antisemitic ideology can bend even the most stellar academic into a primitive propaganda mouthpiece.

Some of the Context of Rev. Józef Kruszyński's "Judeological" Works and Opinions

Investigating Rev. Józef Kruszyński's "Judeological" writings quickly leads us to the question of how his undeniably anti-Jewish views first came to be. Neither his biography, his memoirs, nor the environment he spent his formative years in carry traces of anything that could feasibly be considered their source. There is no record of him ever experiencing hostility from the Jews; on the contrary, in his memoirs he mentions being treated with kindness and respect. He felt safe in their presence for a number of reasons. First and foremost, because he belonged to Poland's ethnic and religious majority. He was well-versed in Jewish culture and knew Hebrew, which he had a magisterial command of thanks to his long years of Bible study. In his capacity as a Catholic priest, he was a figure of considerable authority for Poles and could shape their opinions and behaviors, which, in a sense, granted him a lot of power over the locals. Historical re-

cords suggest that in Włocławek, where he spent nearly twenty years, the local Jewish community was vibrant and deeply involved with the life of the city. A listing of all organizations registered with the city reveals that the Jews of Włocławek were a very diverse community in terms of professions, wealth, religions, and politics. Admittedly, the Zionist movement, which Kruszyński wrote about at length and which lay at the heart of much of his concerns, had a strong presence in Włocławek, and it is possible that this notion of spirited Jewish activism drove his growing unease.

While Kruszyński tends to demonize Jews, often painting them as antichrists, Bolsheviks, and communists, in reality there were very few communist-leaning Jews in Włocławek, if any, while the reaction of the local Jews to the Soviet invasion of 1920 was far from uniform – some people explicitly sided with and supported the Soviets, while others fought in the ranks of the Polish Army and rendered financial support to detachments assigned to defend the city; additionally, the Włocławek Kehilla officials published an appeal to their fellow local Jews, calling on them to stand in defense of the country, a very significant development that Kruszyński fails to mention anywhere. Here, we would do well to recall “W oświeceniu chrześcijańskim” [Through a Christian Lens], a piece published by Jewish historian Meir Balaban in *Nayer Haynt* in response to Kruszyński’s continued antisemitic publications, in which the author declares that the Jews of Włocławek never saw Kruszyński as bearing them ill-will until he began publishing one antisemitic screed after another. Dealing with two of Kruszyński’s pamphlets, *Dążenia Żydów w dobie obecnej* (Kruszyński, 1921a) and *Żargon żydowski* (Kruszyński, 1921d), Balaban’s piece was not a polemic, but nevertheless attacked their faux academic character and the seriousness of Kruszyński’s beliefs and works.³⁶

36 Library of the Higher Theological Seminary in Włocławek, *Recenzje, krytyki, wzmianki 1921–(1923)*, pp. 20–23. The dossier contains press clippings collected by Rev. Kruszyński, most of which pertain in some way to the Jewish question. The clippings include his own articles and essays, advertisements of his anti-Jewish books and brochures, reviews from his publications, notes about live readings. The dossier also includes an article penned by Meir Balaban and published in *Nayer Haynt* on June 24, 1921, and its Polish translation, released in Communiqué No. 124 on June 26, 1921, by the Press Office of the Zionist Organization in Poland (Organizacja Syjonistyczna w Polsce). In the article, Balaban writes: “As of today, Poland sorely lacks literature that would see Jews with an impartial eye. The authors are usually either Jews [...] or Christians, and in the latter case it is almost a given that the work is antisemitic in nature; it is impossible for them to be impartial, because the sources they draw on and the assumptions they base their reasoning on are already poisoned with antisemitism. [...] A perfect example of that is Rev. Kruszyński and his ‘studies’ concerning Jews. The author is a priest in Włocławek, where he has the ear of the local bishop. The Jews of Włocławek say that Kruszyński never bore them ill will; but once he began publishing his screeds, he became an enemy, even though he himself might not have felt like one. [...] We have seen over and over writers who publish one book on Jews, then a second and a third, and suddenly they become specialists, experts on Judaism. That is what happened with Rev. Kruszyński. He believed his ‘study’ would uncover a new world, so that each and every Pole would drop whatever they were doing – the peasant would abandon the land, the merchant would abandon his business – and they would all tackle the Jewish question. Meanwhile, no such thing transpires – peasants still work the land, merchants still trade their wares, often hand in hand with Jews. This enrages the author, so he writes a second book, and a third and a fourth, and that is where we find ourselves today. While it is perfectly possible that he is at his desk right now, writing ever new books [...] as of today, we are still only at four.” Then Balaban attacks the academic rigor of books based on pseudohistorical and pseudoscientific sources: “All this leads the author to the conclusion: Jews cannot be granted the rights of a minority, as that would make them much more than just tenants, and that simply cannot be! Poland granting the Jewish language minority language rights would be a national threat! Advancing these claims is the real purpose of Rev. Kruszyński’s book. It’s a pity, however, that the author takes so long to get to them, exhausting his readers along the way, rather than just speaking his mind at the outset.”

If Kruszyński's personal relationships and experiences with the Jews cannot explain his antisemitic positions, then their origins should be sought elsewhere. His biography and memoirs suggest that he was a voracious reader who spent much of his time in libraries at home and abroad, he knew at least a couple of foreign languages, and traveled extensively. He likely first came into contact with antisemitic literature while still a seminarian in Włocławek. He is known to have read *Niwa*, *Rola*, as well as articles penned by Jan Jeleński, Teodor Jeske-Choiński, and, most likely, Rev. Justyn Bonawentura Pranajtis. In the seminary, he was introduced to official Catholic Church teachings on Jews and Judaism, including specific theological, doctrinal, and historical considerations. During his time at the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy he continued his theological studies and met student favorite Rev. Justyn Pranajtis,³⁷ a lecturer at the Academy known for his antisemitic views and publications. It would seem that it was somewhere between 1894 and 1903, between the ages of 17 and 26, that Kruszyński was “irreversibly infected” with antisemitic ideology. It is rather hard to find a proper description for it, but suffice it to say that antisemitic ideology is incredibly resilient and instills in its adherents an imperviousness to reason and rational arguments.

In *Moje wspomnienia*, Kruszyński identifies Pranajtis as his Hebrew teacher from the Theological Academy. Pranajtis was keenly interested in Judaism, the Talmud in particular, and even authored the popular essay *Chrześcijanin w Talmudzie Żydowskim, czyli tajemnicza nauka rabinistyczna o chrześcijanach* [Christians in the Talmud, or The Secret Rabbinic Teachings About the Christians]. The publication triggered a heated debate in Christian and Jewish circles, which, in turn, drew further response from Pranajtis in the form of his 1892 article “Z tajemnic talmudycznych” [From the Secrets of the Talmud] and the 1894 follow-up “Jeszcze słówko” [One More Thing], both published in the *Rola* weekly (as cited in Kumor, 1984–1985, pp. 348–349). But that wasn't the extent of his contribution, his bylines in *Rola* also included his 1892 articles “Kobieta w judaizmie: Urywek ze studiów nad talmudem” [Women in Judaism: From My Studies of the Talmud] and “Jeszcze słówko panu P... z Izraelity” [One Last Word for Mr. P from *Izraelita*], as well as the 1896 article “W sprawie rewelacji ex-masońskich” [On the Revelations Brought Forth by Former Freemasons]. Kruszyński does not mention either the essay or the articles in his memoirs. It's difficult to say whether he knew them or not, but it's highly likely he did. His memoirs also reveal that during his time at the seminary in Włocławek (from 1894 onward), he often read *Rola*, *Przegląd Powszechny*, *Przegląd Katolicki*, *Niwa*, and *Gazeta Warszawska*. In 1913, the Minister of Justice of the Russian Empire called Pranajtis as an expert witness on matters of Jewish religion to testify in the notorious blood libel trial of Menahem Mendel Beilis in Kiev. Beilis was arrested in July 1911 on charges of kidnapping and ritual murder of a Christian child. Despite international outcry, Beilis eventually stood trial, which began on September 25 and concluded on October 28, 1913. During the proceedings, even after key witnesses withdrew their testi-

37 See: footnote 6.

mony, Pranajtis tried to assert that from a “scientific” standpoint, the case was a typical ritual murder. His arguments were then quickly dismantled by Yaakov Matze, the chief rabbi of Moscow, who laid bare Pranajtis’ extremely superficial knowledge of the Talmud. The court eventually acquitted Beilis of all the charges (Żebrowski, 2003, pp. 157–158). Despite his humiliation at the trial, Pranajtis was still seen as the leading authority on the Talmud by Kruszyński and other anti-Jewish authors.

As I already mentioned above, Kruszyński was known to be a reader of *Rola*. The weekly was founded by Jan Jeleński, who also served as its editor-in-chief for 27 years. Jeleński was a nationalist and a conservative, who sought to establish a strong conservative Catholic movement in the country. In *Rola*, the “Jewish question” was a staple theme and the magazine was well-known for its antisemitic slant. It also ran a permanent “Judaica” column and coordinated the political antisemitism movement in the Russian partition. *Rola* frequently published contributions from authors including Bishop Karol Niedziałkowski, Ludomir Prószyński, Teodor Jeske-Choiński, Józef Rogosz, Michał Plater, and Franciszek Olszewski, all of whom were known for their antisemitic sentiment. *Rola* was especially focused on anti-Jewish content between 1883 and 1891, and later after 1905. The magazine pushed an abstract portrayal of Jews, which painted them as enemies of Poland and all things Polish or Christian, as corruptors, exploiters, swindlers, nihilists, godless human traffickers, schemers, liberals, Zionists, and socialists, whose primary objective was the subjugation of the world. The weekly also promoted the idea of greater nationalization of the economy and trade (Śliwa, 1994, pp. 179–180; 1997, pp. 7–14). These same stereotypes were reprised several decades later in Kruszyński’s anti-Jewish tracts. The views of the aforementioned *Rola* contributor Teodor Jeske-Choiński (1854–1920), Andrzej Niemojewski (1864–1921), and Pranajtis (1861–1917) were crucial in the crystallization of Kruszyński’s own anti-Jewish positions. He saw all three as pre-eminent experts on the “Jewish question,” often drew on their work, and identified them as some of the most prominent figures in this particular field. Out of Jeske-Choiński’s broad body of work, Kruszyński tended to rely on passages from two works specifically: *Historja Żydów w Polsce* [The History of Jews in Poland] and *Poznaj Żyda* [Investigate the Jew]. Śliwa argues that Jeske-Choiński was one of the most prolific anti-Jewish writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with over 20 monographs, treatises, and novels to his name, plus a broad collection of newspaper and magazine articles, frequently touching on subjects such as: the conflict between “Semites” and “Aryans,” the persistent, insidious, and harmful presence of Jews, the threat they posed to Poland, Christianity, and the Church, the Talmud as the source of Jewish contempt and hatred for Gentiles and the basis of Jewish solidarity, the “religious formalism” of Jews, “Jewish separatism,” Jews pictured as greedy, dishonest, deceitful, cynical, etc., the Jews’ appetite for global domination, Jewish conspiracies, the “Judeification of culture,” the impossibility of assimilation, moderate support for Zionism, curbing Jewish rights, and the need to expel Jews from Poland. Jeske-Choiński encouraged Poles to

rise up and unite in their struggle against the Jews, and to base this movement on Catholic social doctrine (Śliwa, 1997, pp. 84–94). All of the themes mentioned above later made an appearance in Kruszyński's writings. Interestingly, Jeske-Choiński's antisemitic efforts were only a part of his overall output, as he was also a very prolific literary critic and novelist (Śliwa, 1997, p. 84).

Andrzej Niemojewski,³⁸ also a prolific writer and poet, was another figure of great authority to Kruszyński. A socialist in his early years, although his views later shifted and brought him closer to National Democracy, Niemojewski was also a social activist, theatre reporter, press correspondent, novella writer, political operative, and editor of *Myśl Niepodległa* (Śliwa, 1997, p. 96), a magazine Kruszyński often referenced in his antisemitic screeds. Among Niemojewski's publications was a book about Pranajtis, *Ksiądz Pranajtis i jego przeciwnicy*, from 1914 (Kumor, 1983, p. 348). Niemojewski also had a very wide range of interests, including religious studies and astrology ("astralism"), and his pursuits brought him into frequent conflict with the Catholic Church, which nevertheless did not prevent Kruszyński from drawing heavily from his works, particularly two: *Dusza żydowska w świetle Talmudu* and *Prawo żydowskie o gojach*. Niemojewski saw his strain of antisemitism as "progressive" and sought to build an ideological framework to support it (Śliwa, 1997, p. 96). He believed that Judaism sat at the core of the "Jewish problem" and "Jewish character," and long argued that Jews, whom he saw as a "religious and racial caste," undermined the development of democracy in Poland and joined various organizations and groups only to further their own interests and sabotage Poles (Śliwa, 1997, p. 98). In his writings, he discussed the specific character of the "Jewish psyche," shaped by their mercantile nature, inquired into their "racial and religious bond," their "anti-Polish sentiments" (Śliwa, 1997, pp. 100–102), examined the "Jewish menace" to contemporary culture and civilization, inquired into "Jewish ethics" as the source of egoism, corruption, and moral relativism, and explored the alleged immorality of the Talmud (Śliwa, 1997, pp. 103–104). Niemojewski also claimed that being called an antisemite should in no way be feared, as antisemitism, that is antipathy toward Jews, was essentially justified (Śliwa, 1997, p. 102). He promoted *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which he believed could warn Poles against the "Jewish peril," and cultivated the rhetoric that branded Jews as Bolsheviks (Śliwa, 1997, p. 103). Nearly all of these themes were later taken up in Kruszyński's writings, including the eager support for *The Protocols*. Niemojewski was also the driving force behind the foundation of the Judeological Institute in Warsaw, which opened its doors on November 13, 1920, only to fizzle out soon afterwards (Piber & Stankiewicz, 1978, pp. 3–10).

When Kruszyński was appointed vicar of the Radomsko parish in 1903, he quickly grew involved in the local boycott of Jewish-owned businesses. This demonstrates deliberate intent, probably inspired by the repeated appeals of anti-Jewish writers he got acquainted with in his earlier years. Kruszyński spent most of the 1905–1909 period

38 See: footnote 34.

traveling for academic and research purposes. Abroad, he most likely came into contact with local antisemitic movements and relevant literature. But he first started exploring the subject in writing in 1919, and in the same year began traveling the country to give antisemitic talks and lectures. His efforts grew particularly intense in 1919–1925, reaching a peak in 1921–1923. A review of his works on the “Jewish question” reveals that the forms he used to express his views and opinions of Jews in writing underwent an evolution, while the views and opinions themselves remained unchanged. The majority of his written efforts strove to paint the “Jewish question” as one of the most important problems faced by nascent Poland and, in order to encourage fellow countrymen to embrace a more permanent solution thereof, Kruszyński portrayed Jews as enemies of Christians and Christianity, Poland and Poles, bound together by a “Talmudic bond” and sharing a worldwide hidden agenda aimed at undermining entire nations and peoples. The body of his antisemitic work can be split into pre-1922 and post-1922 periods, with the open usage of passages from *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in his 1922 pamphlet *Dlaczego występuję przeciwko Żydom?* marking the watershed moment. His post-1922 writings are characterized by explicit demonization of Jews, a depiction he shied away from in earlier works. After 1922, his prior hostility toward the Jews is justified retroactively by their portrayal as antichrists and collaborators of Satan, a framing allegedly corroborated by their involvement with Bolshevism and communism, both of which are seen as seeking the destruction of Christianity and the Catholic Church.

Other factors that considerably influenced the views on Jews held by Kruszyński included the position and teaching of the Catholic Church, as well as the efforts of the National Democracy movement and its affiliate, Towarzystwo “Rozwój.” The position and teaching of the Church – which included notions such as Jewish responsibility for the death of Christ, life in Diaspora as divine punishment for Jewish sins, and the replacement theology – as well as the general antipathy and prejudice exhibited by the clergy toward Jews likely prompted Kruszyński to reaffirm his views. Likewise important were the ideologically-motivated efforts of the National Democracy movement – with which Kruszyński was tangentially associated – especially its highly critical view of ethnic minorities in Poland, and the activities of Towarzystwo “Rozwój,” whose sole focus was the struggle against the “Jewish peril” framed here to embody the “foreign deluge,” with which he was closely affiliated.

The views on Jews and Judaism that Kruszyński promoted in his writings fell well within the mainstream of Catholic thought at the time. Admittedly, the solutions to the “Jewish question” he proposed diverged considerably from the position of the Church, which officially offered no other avenues aside from baptism. But by no means did that restraint of the Church translate into the subject never being raised publicly by either Catholic press or clergymen. On the contrary, it was discussed rather broadly, in the media as well, and explored in individual publications, including Kruszyński’s. In a handful of letters addressed to churchgoers and parliamentarians, Polish bishops cautioned

against embracing a pogrom mentality and encouraged the faithful to help Jews in need, but on the other they did little to discredit oft-repeated canards about Jews seeking to undermine Catholics and Poland, engaging in exploitation, deception, and human trafficking, spreading moral decay, pornography, debauchery, and intemperance, seeking to subjugate entire countries, participating in coups and mass murder, lacking faith, and bringing antisemitism upon themselves – it could even be said that their statements suggested that they themselves believed these allegations. This tendency to equate Jews taking a stand on social issues with Bolsheviks and seeing Jewish activism as a threat to Christians and Christianity may have prompted many bishops to join in calling for a boycott of Jewish-owned stores, publishing houses, press titles, and Jewish culture (Wilk, 1992, pp. 182–183).³⁹

Here, we would do well to take note of the deeply national character of the Polish Catholic Church, its tendency conflate religion with ethnicity or nationality, and its loyalty toward the Vatican and the Pope. The saying that being Polish necessarily meant being Catholic was often repeated by not only local bishops, but even papal nuncios who served in Poland at the time, including Archbishops Francesco Marmaggi and Filippo Cortesi (Modras, 1994, p. 332). In 1929, Pius XI issued an encyclical on education, which prohibited the formation of mixed Christian-Jewish classes and forbade non-Catholic staff from teaching Christian children (Modras, 1994, p. 330). This clearly demonstrates that Kruszyński's postulates calling for segregated schooling directly corresponded to the Pope's own recommendations.

While Pope Pius XI published four more encyclicals, neither of them dealt explicitly with the discrimination of Jews, focusing instead on other social issues, somewhat in spite of the fact that after Hitler's seizure of power in 1933 Jews found themselves facing a brutal campaign of persecution and harassment (Krakowski, 1976, pp. 705–716). In 1931, the Pope wrote *Quadragesimo anno* and *Non abbiamo bisogno*, in which he decried Fascist influence on Christian youth. In 1937, meanwhile, Pius XI published *Divini Redemptoris*, which warned against the dangers of communism, and *Mit brennender Sorge*, which denounced the Nazi abuses of the Church in Germany (Ignatowski, 1999, p. 22; Horoszewicz, 1999, pp. 205–212). Records have since shown that on June 22, 1938, Pope Pius XI ordered work to begin on an encyclical focused on racism and antisemitism. A draft version of the document, tentatively titled *Humani Generis*, was completed, but in all likelihood the Pope failed to read it before his death on February 10, 1939. However, despite explicitly condemning racism, the document still repeated the notorious anti-Jewish canards and prejudices that painted Jews as fanatics, rejects,

39 Analyzing a letter penned by Cardinal Hlond in *Kardynał August Hlond (1926–1948) wobec Żydów* [Cardinal Hlond (1926–1948) and the Jews] (Muszyński, 1991, pp. 81–87), Henryk Muszyński points out the antithetical structure of the letter: on the one hand, Hlond repeats widely-held beliefs that cast the Jews in a highly unsympathetic light, albeit attempting to mollify them with phrases like “usually”; on the other hand, he then warns against adopting anti-Jewish positions “imported from abroad.” Muszyński argues that the latter argument is a warning against the Nazi strain of antisemitism.

oathbreakers, etc. (Ignatowski, 1999, pp. 20–27; Horoszewicz, 1999, pp. 205–212; Pas-selecq & Suchecky, 1997).

In September 1934, the Polish Episcopate passed a resolution establishing a center for Jewish mission work. The task was taken up by Archbishop Romuald Jałbrzykowski of Vilnius, who, in turn, charged Rev. Stanisław Trzeciak with overseeing the project. While little additional information is available, it is somewhat surprising that the project was entrusted to a priest notorious for his anti-Jewish treatises.

In the early twentieth century, Christian thinking in Europe featured four distinct approaches to Judaism: 1. religious approach with pseudoscientific and traditionalist characteristics (negative view of Judaism); 2. religious approach with scientific characteristics (positive and scientific view of Judaism); 3. religious approach with pragmatic characteristics (positive view of Judaism); 4. ideological and political antisemitism (radically negative view of Judaism).⁴⁰ Kruszyński represented approaches No. 1 and 4, and

40 1. Writers representing the religious approach with pseudoscientific and traditionalist characteristics usually tackled religious issues, mostly those that emerged following the rise of Christianity, which were the staple of Christian-Jewish polemics since the Antiquity. The most frequently explored themes included: messianism, incarnation, the unity and oneness of God, the meaning and contents of the Talmud, anti-Christian themes in the Talmud, the figure of Christ, God's alleged rejection of Jews and their divine punishment, and Jewish life in the diaspora. The body of literature produced within this approach was characterized by poor academic rigor masked with academic posturing, an accusatory tone, accentuating the negative aspects of Judaism, a refusal to accept the latest developments in science and theology, and endorsement of a framing of post-Biblical Judaism that portrayed it as a false religion. The approach was informed by traditional Christian anti-Judaism and the works of Johannes Andreas Eisenmenger (seventeenth century), August Rohling (nineteenth century), Doctor Justus (Aaron Briman, nineteenth century), and Justyn Pranajtis (nineteenth/twentieth centuries). Representatives of the approach held a decidedly negative view of Judaism.

2. Religious approach with scientific characteristics was marked by a high degree of thematic complexity and a proclivity for employing innovative methods of inquiry and the latest achievements in science and theology, both those developed by Christians and those devised by Jews. The traditional thematic roster of Christian-Jewish polemics, as well as polemics penned by Christian Hebraists, would therefore be expanded with new approaches and initiatives, which usually offered new interpretations of issues like the Pharisees, the Jewish roots of Christ and Christianity, the values espoused by Judaism, the Talmud, and Rabbinic literature, as well as specific points where Christianity and Judaism intersect. This particular approach was informed by the works of Travers Herford, George Foot Moore, Hermann Strack, Paul Billerbeck, Franz Dietzsch, Fr. Joseph Bonsirven, SJ, and James Parkes. Representatives of this approach held a positive view of Judaism.

3. Religious approach with pragmatic characteristics was marked by a positive view of Judaism and a proclivity for practical implementation of stated beliefs. Late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the rise of groups, organizations, and institutes that were stamped with a missionary character on the one hand, but were informed by the spirit of religious renewal in their view of Jews and Judaism on the other. The approach developed independently of, or in parallel to, the official position of the Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches, even though there was some involvement of the clergy in these movements. Many of the organizations were inspired or founded by Jewish converts. The best known of these include the Soeurs de Notre Dame de Sion (Convent of the Sisters of Zion), Pères de Sion (Congregation of the Brothers of Zion), the Pauluswerk (Work of St. Paul) operating under the auspices of the Pastoral Institute in Vienna, and Amici Israel (Friends of Israel). Most of these organizations encountered considerable difficulties. For example, Amici Israel worked to put a stop to popular Jewish deicide accusations, to curb the spread of anti-Jewish canards and tropes and the defamation of Jewish rituals, and to curtail the usage of antisemitic language and hurtful stereotypes. It also called for increased focus on the primacy of God's love for the Jews and of its enduring character, as well as postulated making changes to liturgy, such as the removal of passages that speak of Jewish perfidy. Two years after its foundation, however, in 1928, the organization was banned by the Holy Office for spreading beliefs that ran against the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

4. Ideological and political antisemitism, usually marked by some strain of racism, ranging from the more rampant to the more subtle and refined. The body of literature produced by representatives of this particular approach was characterized by a focus on anti-Jewish themes, and an ardent drive toward exposing Judaism as a morally depraved and dead religion, based on immoral ethics and stripped of any spiritual elements; it portrayed Judaism as a threat to Christian civilization and painted Jews as agents of evil, working on every level of society, often involved in secret societies, conspiracies, and active in Masonic movements. Representatives

his views, as well as his blend of traditional anti-Judaism and a more contemporary antisemitism, were far from novel or original. Similar ideas and notions were already widespread in anti-Jewish literature published in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, platforms of right-wing political parties, and Catholic press titles published in interwar Poland, including *Gazeta Kościelna*, *Pro Christo*, *Przegląd Powszechny*, *Przewodnik Katolicki*, *Sodalis Marianus*, *Mały Dziennik* (Landau-Czajka, 1988, 1991a, 1991b, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998; Libonka, 1995; Modras, 1994). Although, as pointed out by Dariusz Libionka, “Judeology” – despite Kruszyński’s apparent passion for it – was something of a side project for him, we would do well to remember that he was nevertheless a member of the country’s Catholic intellectual elite who deeply believed in the significance of his mission. What set Kruszyński apart from his fellow antisemitic writers was the pronounced impact that his publications were capable of eliciting – an esteemed Bible scholar, he was seen as an expert on Judaism, while his prolific academic output, erudition, and position in the Church hierarchy burdened him with certain responsibility as well as granted him considerable influence on public opinion and behavior.⁴¹

A fundamental shift in the position of the Catholic Church and its theologians on Judaism and other religions came about only in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, which drew to a close in 1965 with the publication of the *Nostra Aetate* declaration.

of this approach were particularly fond of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and held strictly negative views of Judaism, ranging from antipathy all the way to extreme denunciation. Naturally, not all criticism of Judaism or Jews is antisemitic; antisemitism comprises a blend of attitudes, language, action, all of which are an expression of underlying prejudice and hostility, as well as a proclivity for falsifying history and misinterpreting reality (for a broader take, see: Majdanik-Lysiak, 2007).

- 41 It should be noted that approaches other than the two represented by Kruszyński also had a strong presence in the writings of Polish clergy. The most trustworthy publications by clergymen, which generally explored some particular aspect of Judaism, usually discussed academic efforts undertaken in Poland or abroad; these included the works of:

Rev. J. Dajczak (his series of articles: “Talmud, jako komentarz do Pism św. Nowego Zakonu” [Talmud as Commentary to the Holy Scripture of the New Testament], “Fragmenty Ewangelii według św. Mateusza w świetle Talmudu” [Passages from the Gospel of Matthew in Light of the Talmud], “Fragmenty Ewangelii według św. Marka, Łukasza, Jana i Dziejów Ap. w świetle Talmudu” [Passages from the Gospels of Mark, Luke, John, and the Acts in Light of the Talmud] (Dajczak, 1932a, 1932b, 1932c, 1932d, 1932e, 1932f, 1932g), drew extensively on Hermann Strack and Paul Billerbeck’s monumental opus *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* [Commentaries to the New Testament in the Talmud and Midrash] and *Das Evangelium nach Markus, Lukas und Johannes und die Apostelgeschichte: Erläutert aus Talmud und Midrasch* [The Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John, and the Acts: As Elucidated by the Talmud and Midrash]),

Rev. M. Morawski (*Wpływ myśli Majmonidesa na św. Tomasza z Akwinu* [The influence of Maimonides on Thomas Aquinas], published in *Przegląd Powszechny* in 1935, drew on Jacob Guttman’s *Das Verhältniss des Thomas von Aquino zum Judenthum und zur jüdischen Litteratur* [The Relationship Between Thomas Aquinas and Judaism and Jewish Literature]),

Rev. T. Wąsik (*Żydowskie i mahometańskie podania o stworzeniu i upadku pierwszych ludzi* [Jewish and Muslim Legends about the Origins and Fall of Man] published in *Miesięcznik Katechetyczny i Wychowawczy* [Religious Instruction and Education Monthly] (Wąsik, 1926) was based on *Ex Oriente lux*, penned by Hugon Winckler, August Wünsche, Wilhelm von Landau, and Carl Niebuhr, and on A. Eberharder’s piece in *Linzer theologischen Quartalschrift* [Linz Theological Quarterly]),

Rev. R. Konecki (*Z homiletyki żydowskiej* [From the Jewish Homiletics] published in 1924 in *Przegląd Homiletyczny* [Homiletic Review] drew from the lectures of Rabbi M. Joel).

Other works were reviews, like Rev. K. Cieśliński’s (who reviewed R. Liliental’s *Dziecko żydowskie* [The Jewish Child] in a 1928 issue of *Ateneum Kapańskie* (Cieśliński, 1928)) or Rev. O. E. Gliński’s (who reviewed A. J. Heschel’s *Die Prophetie: O istocie proroctwa* [Die Prophetie: On the Nature of Prophecy] in *Przegląd Biblijny* (Gliński, 1937)). Most of these works were driven by the desire to share and discuss with the readers an interesting issue or problem that could potentially enrich Christian thought, but it should also be noted that many of them included criticism or sarcastic asides aimed at Judaism (for a broader take, see: Majdanik-Lysiak, 2007).

But the change was not prompted solely by a shift in the thinking of Catholic theologians; it was driven, to a significant extent, by contributions from Jewish rabbis, writers, and thinkers. A particularly important role was played by the study of *Teaching of Contempt* by Jules Isaac, a Jewish French historian, and its influence on Pope John XXIII, who convened the Council (Obirek, 2009, p. 299). Neither should we overlook the decisive influence of Jewish philosopher and religious thinker Rabbi Joshua Henschel on the final shape of the aforementioned declaration, as it was thanks to him that the passage expressing the Christian hope for Jews to embrace the teaching of Christ was struck from the final draft (Furnal, 2016). As a representative of the American Jewish Committee, Henschel was involved in the drafting of this brief document between 1962 and 1965. Before 1965, the Church had never formulated a theology of Judaism, nor had it ever attempted to formulate any sort of Catholic theology of religion. Consequently, in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, the Church's position on Jews and Judaism underwent three fundamental changes: 1) rejection of the theology of replacement, which reduced Judaism to a dead religion that was expected to expire following the rise of Christianity; 2) rejection of the theology of eternal wandering, which argued that the Jews were condemned to wander the earth without a country to call home due to their alleged sin of deicide; 3) rejection of interpretations that portrayed Christ as hostile toward his fellow Jews in favor of portrayals that saw him as a member of his Jewish community.

The shift, however, has been slow, and the Church has likewise been taking its time to reflect on its own doctrine. One example can be found in the fact that only in 2001 did the Church concede that Christians may accept the Jewish interpretation of the Bible as possible and parallel to the interpretation enshrined in Church teachings, and see Jewish exegesis as a valuable one. In *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, the Pontifical Biblical Commission argued that:

Christians can and ought to admit that the Jewish reading of the Bible is a possible one, in continuity with the Jewish Sacred Scriptures from the Second Temple period, a reading analogous to the Christian reading which developed in parallel fashion. Both readings are bound up with the vision of their respective faiths, of which the readings are the result and expression. Consequently, both are irreducible. On the practical level of exegesis, Christians can, nonetheless, learn much from Jewish exegesis practiced for more than two thousand years, and, in fact, they have learned much in the course of history (Ratzinger, 2002, p. 11).

Translated by Jan Szelągiewicz

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**Pomiędzy fascynacją a potępieniem. Żydzi i judaizm w pismach
oraz biografii ks. prof. Józefa Kruszyńskiego (1877–1953)
– przedwojennego rektora Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego**

Abstrakt: W pierwszej części artykułu autorka przedstawia życie i działalność księdza Józefa Kruszyńskiego, rektora Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego. Druga część zawiera analizę publicystyki antyżydowskiej wydawanej w serii „Z Dziedziny Żydostwa” na tle ogólnej, bogatej twórczości Kruszyńskiego, której większość stanowią prace biblistyczne oraz translatorskie (tłumaczenie z języka hebrajskiego na polski ksiąg Starego Testamentu). W końcowej części autorka śledzi początki i źródła antyżydowskich poglądów Kruszyńskiego.

Wyrażenia kluczowe: Józef Kruszyński; antysemityzm



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Publisher: Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland

Author: Anna Jolanta Majdanik, Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, Cracow, Poland

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8383-9164>

Correspondence: annamajdanik@gmail.com

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