Affinity and Revulsion:
Poland Reacts to the Spanish Right, 1936-1939 (And Beyond)[1]

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Poland has customarily viewed Spain through the prism of its own domestic concerns. More specifically, between 1936 and 1939, Spain figured in Poland's public discourse to the extent that the politics, ideas, and circumstances of the Spanish Right were similar to those of its Polish counterpart. The salient features of the Polish Right were its Catholicism, which gave it a universalist frame of reference; traditionalism, which limited the boundaries of its radicalism; anti-Communism, which fueled its rhetoric; anti-Sovietism and anti-Germanism, which defined its security

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[1] This essay was written for the Historical Society's National Convention at Boston University, May 27-29, 1999, and specifically for the panel "Reaction and Counterrevolution in Spain: Carlism, 1810-1939." Parts of this paper are based upon my *Zagrabiona pamięć: Wojna w Hiszpanii, 1936-1939* [Expropriated Memory: The War in Spain, 1936-1939] (Warszawa: Fronda, 1997) [afterward *Zagrabiona*]. All unattributed quotes and data are from this work. All translations are mine unless otherwise stated. For assistance with this essay I would like to thank the late Gregory Randolph (University of Chicago), Richard Tyndorf, Wojciech Jerzy Muszyński, Leszek Żebrowski, and Anna Gräfin Praschma. I also benefitted from very generous comments by Professor Alexandra Wilhelmsen (University of Dallas), Professor Carolyn Boyd (University of Texas at Austin), and Dr. Patric Foley. I dedicate this essay to the memory of Gregory Randolph.

concerns; and nationalism, which circumscribed its instinct to fight in Spain.

This essay considers the extent of the identification of the Polish Right with its Spanish counterpart. Further, it examines the response of Poland's major political parties to the Civil War in Spain. While it scrutinizes the policy of the Polish government, it considers the Left wing responses to the conflict less exhaustively. Finally, it weighs the role of the

Spanish Right in the political discourse in Poland following 1939, including contemporary times.[2]

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[2] For a general background see Raymond Carr, *Modern Spain, 1875-1980* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). For the antecedents of the Civil War see Gerald Brenan, *The Spanish Labyrinth: An Account of the Social and Political Background of the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). On the conflict in Spain and its international implications see Fernando Diaz-Plaja, *La Guerra de España en sus Documentos*, 2nd Edition (Barcelona: Ediciones Marte, 1966); Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1961) [afterwards *The Spanish Civil War*]; Gabriel Jackson, ed., *The Spanish Civil War* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1972); Sheelagh M. Ellwood, *The Spanish Civil War* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1991); Warren H. Carroll, *The Last Crusade* (Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press, 1996). On the Spanish Right, see Luís Redondo and Juan de Závala, *El Requeté: La Tradición no Muere* (Barcelona: Editorial AHR, 1957); Josep Carles Clemente, *El Carlismo en la España de Franco: Bases Documentales, 1936-1977* (Madrid: Editorial Fundamentos, 1994); Martin Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis in Spain, 1931-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Stanley G. Payne, *Falange: A History of Fascism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1961). On Franco and his government, see Brian Crozier, *Franco* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown, and Company, 1967); Stanley G. Payne, *The Franco Regime, 1936-1975* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987). On the religious aspect of the war, see José M. Sánchez, *The Spanish Civil War as a Religious Tragedy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987). For an illustrated account of the atrocities by the Left see *The General Cause (Causa General), The Red Domination in Spain: Preliminary Information Drawn Up by the Public Prosecutor's Office* (Madrid: Afrodisio Aguado, S.A., 1946). On the Soviet involvement, see E.H. Carr, *The Comintern and the Spanish Civil War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984). On the aftermath of the war, see Paul Preston, *The Politics of Revenge: Fascism and the Military in 20th Century Spain* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

Tradition and Modernization

Poland's popular perception of Spain reflects an eclectic synthesis of myths and symbols that draw on Polish history and tradition.[3] However, it is also based upon confessional, social, political, economic, and temperamental similarities between both nations.[4]

Spain has figured prominently in the Polish consciousness on a historical and literary level. Poland's powerful aristocracy (*magnateria*) felt an affinity for Spanish grandees. Spain's heroic and chivalric past in general and the existence of numerous *hidalgos*, petty nobles, in

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[3] For general scholarship on Polish history, see Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland, Volume I: The Origins to 1795*, and *Volume II: 1795 to the Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982) [afterwards *God's Playground*]; Jerzy Braun, ed., *Poland in Christian Civilization* (London: Veritas Foundation Publishing Centre, 1985) [afterwards *Poland*]; Adam Zamoyski, *The Polish Way: A Thousand-Year History of the Poles and Their Culture* (New York and Toronto: Franklin Watts, 1988) [afterwards *The Polish Way*].

[4] The eminent monarchist scholar Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn argued that, on the Right, Spanish Catholicism and national consciousness fused to develop a peculiar brand of "radicalism" and "extremism." Both expressed themselves in "thanatocentrism", that is customary invocations of death, and virulent rhetoric, which, however, only rarely results in violent action. One can easily make a similar case for Poland where customarily verbal abuse failed to translate into violence. See Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, *Liberty or Equality: Fortieth Anniversary Edition, 1952-1992* (Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press, 1992), 185, 191-192, 332, 334-335. For a short survey of the Polish-Spanish relations from a liberal Catholic point of view, see Maria Wójcik, "Hiszpańsko-polskie kontakty religijne," *Encyklopedia Katolicka, Volume 6* (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 1993), 6: 1047-1050.

particular, evoked much interest in Poland if only because many of the modern Polish intelligentsia descended from the gentry (*szlachta*) which, in the 18th century, constituted up to fifteen percent of the population.[5] However, religion was a much more important bond between Spain and Poland than any real or imagined links between the *hidalgos* and the *szlachta*. Both were Catholic countries with a long experience of struggle against the Infidel. While Spain guarded the western border of Christendom, Poland watched the eastern frontier. Poles regarded their country as the *Antemurale*, the Bulwark of Christendom. Its role was to defend Europe from Asiatic Mongol hordes, schismatic Muscovites, and, of course, Muslim Ottomans. Therefore, Poles tended to view the Spanish *Reconquista* and subsequent wars against Islam as quite similar to their own battles.

Further, over the centuries some institutional ties developed between the Catholic Church of Poland and its Spanish counterpart. For instance, in 1608 a few Bonifratres from Spain established the Order's presence in

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[5] Hans Roos, "The Polish Nobility in Pre-Revolutionary Europe," *The Tradition of Polish Ideals*, edited by W.J. Stankiewicz (London: Orbis Books, Ltd., 1981), 85-112 [afterwards "Polish" in *Tradition*].

the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Their contribution to the country's health care system was quite significant.[6]

Between the 16th and 18th centuries the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth maintained cordial diplomatic and trade relations with Spain. As the British historian Norman Davies discovered, in 1597 Polish diplomacy even intervened unsuccessfully with Protestant powers to stop raids on Spanish shipping, which provoked an icy response from the Dutch oligarchs and a furious outburst from the English Queen Elizabeth I.[7] However, in the realm of foreign policy, after the middle of the 17th century, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth found itself increasingly at

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[6] Incidentally, unlike its Spanish equivalent, the Polish Inquisition had practically no influence. Also, while Spain expelled its Jews, Poland welcomed them. See Françoise Le Moal, "Tolerance in Poland: Political Choice and Tradition," in Stankiewicz, *Tradition*, 52-84; Janusz Tazbir, *A State Without Stakes: Polish Religious Toleration in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* ([New York and Warsaw]: The Kościuszko Foundation, Twayne Publishers, and Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, [1973]); Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997).

[7] Davies, *God's Playground*, 1: 392-393.

odds with the Habsburgs of Austria, whose relatives also ruled Spain. In addition, Poland's nobility found Habsburg absolutism unpalatable.[8]

At home, the Polish nobility elected its kings. The nobles also cherished their local privileges and, especially, the right of the "free veto" (*liberum veto*). Initially, the *liberum veto* developed to prevent a tyranny of the majority over individual dissent and to engender consultations between parliamentary minorities and majorities but, after two hundred years of its rather successful application, the once-glorious right degenerated into a dangerous instrument that paralysed all parliamentary proceedings. Nonetheless, many among the nobility preferred such "Polish anarchy" over royal absolutism. Therefore, the *szlachta* used and abused the constitutional right to lawful revolt (*konfederacja*) and illegal rebellion (*rokosz*) to oppose what it viewed as absolutist designs by the country's elected monarchs.

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[8] Professor Andrzej Sulima-Kamiński of Georgetown University argues that the Polish nobility upheld, in essence, a peculiar republican model of government. The main threat to this system was not so much Western European absolutism as Russian autocracy. See Andrzej Sulima Kamiński, *Republic vs. Autocracy: Poland-Lithuania and Russia, 1686-1697* (Cambridge, Mass.: Distributed by Harvard University Press for the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1993).

In 1768 the Polish traditionalist nobility, invoking the right to revolt, raised their banner for the last time in the so-called Confederacy of Bar. This revolt was led, among others, by Kazimierz Pułaski (Casimir Pulaski), the future hero of the American War for Independence. The revolt targeted the modernizing King Stanisław Poniatowski and his Russian allies, who meddled menacingly in Polish affairs. In time, the parallels between the Confederacy of Bar and the future Carlist Wars became apparent to the Polish public. Neither did the Poles forget that King Charles III of Spain was the only monarch in Europe to object when, in 1772, the Confederacy of Bar was crushed and Poland partitioned for the first time by Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Symbolically, after the third, and final, partition of Poland in 1795, the Spanish envoy Don Domingo de Yriarte was one of the last foreign diplomats to leave Warsaw (the Papal Nuncio was the last).

Subsequent Polish-Spanish contacts occurred during the Napoleonic Wars. The Polish Legions participated in the French invasion of Spain in 1809. The Poles distinguished themselves in several battles, including

Zaragoza[9] and Somosierra, where the Polish *chevaux légéres* under Colonel Jan Kozietulski and Major Wincenty Niegolewski captured the pass in a mad charge against overwhelming odds. However, whereas the Polish involvement with Napoleon was alternately praised and cursed, in the collective Polish memory, the affair in Spain was remembered not as a war against the Spaniards but, rather self-servingly, only as an integral part of the struggle for Poland's independence.[10] It was in this vein that Poland's greatest Romantic poet, Adam Mickiewicz, praised one of his heroes:

> On potem w Hiszpaniji, gdy nasze ułany
> Zdobyły Samosierry grzbiet oszańcowany,
> Obok Kozietulskiego był ranny dwa razy...
>
> And later he in Spain, when our uhlans
> Took Samosierra [sic] trenches with the lance,

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[9] One of my ancestors, Second Lieutenant Jan Cieszewski, was killed while storming Zaragoza (Saragossa). See *Herbarz polski i imionospis zasłużonych w Polsce ludzi wszystkich stanów i czasów: Ułożony porządkiem alfabetycznym na podstawie Herbarza Niesieckiego i manuskryptów*, *Tom I* (Lwów: Drukiem Kornela Pillera, 1855), 95-96.

[10] Oddly, some Spaniards, including government and Church officials, continue to commemorate Polish participation in Napoleon's wars in Spain. For instance, a local Catholic priest in Somosierra, Father José Medina Pintado, takes care of the graves of the Polish cavalrymen and upholds the tradition of the battle. See the unpublished letter of Felicjan Niegolewski in Szczecin to the editor of *Biuletyn Ziemiański* in Warsaw, 10 December 1996 (a copy in my possession).

Was wounded twice at Kozietulski's side...[11]

Spanish influences on Polish literature went beyond shared history. In the 17th century Andrzej Morsztyn translated the Frenchman Pierre Corneille's *Le Cid*, thus familiarizing the Poles with the *motif* of Spanish heroism. The play was widely performed in royal and aristocratic theaters in Poland.[12] Spain emerged in Polish prose, too. In 1805 Count Jan Potocki published his famous *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa*, a wild adventure set in the 18th century with Spanish Moors, Catholics, Jews, nobles, thieves, and pirates, which was hailed by some as a first proto-post-modernist novel.[13] Not surprisingly, Potocki's work proved much less influential than that of his more accessible Romantic successors. The universal appeal of poetry was particularly powerful. Juliusz Słowacki, a

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[11] See the bilingual version of Adam Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz or the Last Foray in Lithuania: A Tale of the Gentry in the Years 1811 and 1812; Pan Tadeusz, czyli ostatni zajazd na Litwie: Historia szlachecka z roku 1811 i 1812 we dwunastu księgach wierszem*, translated by Kenneth R. Mackenzie (London: The Polish Cultural Foundation, 1986), 498-499.

[12] Władysław Tomkiewicz, "Artistic Culture in the Seventeenth Century in Poland (Before the Swedish Invasion)," in Braun, *Poland*, 393.

[13] See Jan Potocki, *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa*, translated by Ian Maclean (London: Penguin Books, 1996). The original was written in French.

great Polish Romantic, was not only influenced by Pedro Calderón de la Barca in his own work, but also translated the Spaniard's poetry into Polish.[14] Another of Poland's Spanish connections is Dr. Józef Leonard, a translator of the poet Ventura Ruiz Aguilera (including the largely unknown "Balada de Polonia") and a lecturer in Slavic affairs in Madrid. Leonard remains largely unknown in the country of his birth despite his lengthy involvement in liberal, progressive, and republican politics in Spain between 1868 and 1881.[15] However, the conservative Józef Nałęcz-Korzeniowski, who smuggled guns for the Traditionalists during the Third Carlist War, later won international fame as Joseph Conrad. His Carlist episode remains largely forgotten, except by the Polish Right. Although he was not a literary giant, at least some Poles also remember Conrad's predecessor in Spain, the adventurous nobleman Aleksander Iliński, who

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[14] Zamoyski, *The Polish Way*, 295.

[15] Edmund S. Urbański, "A Polish Hispanist, Dr. Józef Leonard, and His Cultural-Political Activities in Spain between 1868 and 1881," in *Studies in Polish Civilization: Selected Papers Presented at the First Congress of the Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences in America, November 25, 26, 27, 1966 in New York*, edited by Damian S. Wandycz ([New York and Hove, Sussex]: Caldra House Ltd., Institute on East Central Europe, Columbia University, and The Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences in America, [1970]), 493-494; Joanna Petry Mroczkowska, “Educational and Political Activities of Dr. Józef Leonard in Central America (1880-1908),” in *Polish Contributions to Latin American Culture*, ed. by Edmund S. Urbanski (Miami, FL: The American Institute of Polish Culture, 1995), 249-57.

fought in the First Carlist War and became possibly the first Polish *torero*.[16]

These disparate literary and historical events combined to form a prism through which educated Poles have looked at Spain. Other important factors shaping the image of Spain in Poland were the apparent similarities between the economy, society, and politics of both nations.

Poland and Spain remained agrarian societies well into the twentieth century. In both countries the process of economic modernization commenced quite late and the industrialization was limited to only a few regions. This contributed to uneven development and strengthened regionalism. The rise of regional consciousness among Spain's Catalans and Basques and of particularism among Poland's Ruthenes and Jews often coincided with social radicalization of the masses. Thus centrifugal tendencies driven by nationalism among ethnic minority groups overlapped with revolutionary inclinations among them as well as in the society at large. Arguably, Polish problems were more acute because of successive foreign domination and partitions.

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[16] Zamoyski, *The Polish Way*, 288.

Independent Poland (1918-1939)

Poland regained its independence in 1918. Immediately, the nation became involved in several bloody conflicts with its neighbours. The victorious Polish-Bolshevik War of 1920 became an especially defining episode in the country's modern history.[17] Politically, Poland established a fragile parliamentary democracy that was overthrown in 1926 by *a coup d'état* by Marshal Józef Piłsudski, a hero of the struggle for Poland's independence, who was backed by the Left. However, he soon alienated many of his leftist supporters. Piłsudski's regime became increasingly authoritarian and based upon an ecclectic coalition of military officers, erstwhile socialists, liberal technocrats, and conservative landed nobility. The authoritarian tendencies increased among the Marshal's successors following his death in 1935.[18] Given Poland’s domestic experience, Polish

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[17] See Norman Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star: The Polish-Soviet War, 1919-20* (London: Orbis Books, 1983).

[18] For a general background of Poland between 1918 and 1939 see Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1990), 27-72.

public opinion paid some attention to the dictatorship of General Miguel Primo de Rivera and the restoration of the Republic in Spain after 1931. More generally, however, Spanish affairs were ignored; they were noticed mainly by aristocrats, scholars, and political activists.

A few Polish aristocrats were related to Spanish bluebloods. In the most prominent instance of the early 20th century, Prince August Czartoryski was married to a royal cousin, Princess Dolores Borbón-Parma. Prince August and his consort maintained several residences throughout Europe, including Dos Hermanos near Seville in southern Spain. The wife of Count Karol Pusłowski was also Spanish.[19] Several Polish historians have noted that the Czartoryskis, the Pusłowskis, and other members of the landed nobility enjoyed enormous unofficial prestige in Polish culture, politics, and the economy that was disproportionate to the size and even wealth of their social group. Their views on Spain carried some weight in society at large. This was especially true about mostly landed noble leadership of the vibrant

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[19] Alfons Jacewicz, *Miranda* (London: B. Świderski, 1962), 28, 36, 84 [afterwards *Miranda*]; Jan Ciechanowski, "Ocalić Hiszpana: Polscy dyplomaci uratowali 350 Frankistów," *Nowe Państwo* [Warszawa], 4 September 1998, 18.

Catholic Action organization of the interwar period. It had its branches in every single parish in Poland and operated under the chairmanship of Count Adolf Bniński. Thus, the sentiments of the Catholic Action members in Poland were shaped by people supportive of the traditionalist and conservative Catholic Spain.[20]

Among the Polish intelligentsia, even prior to 1918, Doña Sofía (Sofitina) Pérez de Eguía y Casanova de Pla y Cancela, having married a Polish philosopher, Professor Wincenty Lutosławski, came to wield enormous informal influence in Polish Catholic and nationalist circles. A monarchist Catholic poet and novelist, a sometime lady-in-waiting, and a close confidante of the dowager Spanish Queen Cristina, Doña Sofitina was also a personal friend of Roman Dmowski, the unquestioned leader of the Polish nationalist movement. Their friendship lasted several decades. According to an American scholar, she and her three daughters became

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[20] Wojciech Roszkowski, *Landowners in Poland, 1918-1939* (New York and Boulder, CO.: East European Monographs and Columbia University Press, 1991), 89-131; Bogusław W. Gałka, *Ziemianie i ich organizacje w Polsce w latach 1918-1939* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 1997), 115-142, 176-200; Szymon Rudnicki, *Ziemiaństwo polskie w XX wieku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Trio, 1996), 82-112. For an excellent general background about the Polish landed nobility see Tadeusz Chrzanowski, ed., *Dziedzictwo: Ziemianie polscy i udział ich w życiu narodu* (Kraków: Znak, 1995).

Dmowski's "surrogate family." Although she became an avid Polish patriot, *Pani* Pérez de Eguía Lutosławska maintained constant contact with her Spanish motherland and its affairs. She was a correspondent of several Spanish and Latin American newspapers and periodicals. She also maintained contact both with the Alfonsine circles and the Carlist court in exile. Of course, Doña Sofitina kept her Polish friends well informed about the situation in Spain. Her nephew, Joaquín Pérez Madrigal, became one of the early Nationalist chroniclers of the Civil War. In addition, a person of influence in the Catholic, conservative, and nationalist circles of Poland was *padre* Pons, a Spanish priest, who taught Spanish at the University of Warsaw.[21]

In the interwar period, Polish scholars focused on Spain rather perenially. Between 1927 and 1929, the liberal *Wiadomości literackie* (Literary News) of Warsaw published a series of articles by Dr. Edward

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[21] See the letter of Kornelia Irena Ruszkowska to MJCH, 27 August 1997; Marja Niklewicz, *Pan Roman: Wspomnienia o Romanie Dmowskim*, ed. by Tomasz Wituch (Warszawa and Pułtusk Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczna w Pułtusku, 2001); Alvin Marcus Fountain II, *Roman Dmowski: Party, Tactics, Ideology, 1895-1907* (New York and Boulder, CO: East European Monographs and Columbia University Press, 1980), 60, 64, 67, 166 [afterwards *Roman*]; Wojciech Wasiutyński, *Czwarte pokolenie: Szkice z dziejów nacjonalizmu polskiego* (London: Odnowa, 1982), 83-84 [afterwards *Czwarte*]; Joaquín Pérez Madrigal, *Augurios, estallidos y episodios de la guerra civil: Cincuenta días con el Ejército del Norte* (Ávila, 1936).

Boye about a variety of Spanish authors. Excerpts of the works of Miguel Cervantes, Miguel de Unamuno, and others appeared in literary magazines. Professor Józef Dzierżykraj-Morawski published an acclaimed survey of Spanish literature. Simultaneously, an anthology of Spanish authors came out, edited by Professor Edward Porębowicz.[22] In 1930 Marek Ehrenpreis wrote a readable travelogue full of ruminations about Jewish monuments and remnants in the Iberian Peninsula.[23] In 1929 Count Józef Tyszkiewicz, a conservative, published the revisionist treatise, *The Spanish Inquisition*, in defense of Catholic Church. Naturally, this foray into history was not impartial scholarship but verged on the polemical.[24]

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[22] Józef Dzierżykraj Morawski, *Wielka literatura powszechna, Tom Drugi, część II: Literatura hiszpańska* (Warszawa: Nakładem Księgarni Trzaski, Everta i Michalskiego, 1933); Edward Porębowicz, ed., *Wielka literatura powszechna, Tom Szósty, część II: Literatura hiszpańska: Antologia* (Warszawa: Nakładem Księgarni Trzaski, Everta i Michalskiego, 1933).

[23] Marek Ehrenpreis, *Kraj między Wschodem a Zachodem: Podróż Żyda po Hiszpanii* (Stanisławów i Warszawa: Nakładem księgarnii Mariana Haskiera, 1930).

[24] Hr. Józef Tyszkiewicz, *Inkwizycja hiszpańska* (Warszawa: Gebethner i Wolff, 1929). This work has been recently excerpted in a leading Polish Catholic conservative periodical. See Hr. Józef Tyszkiewicz, "Inkwizycja hiszpańska," *Fronda: Pismo poświęcone* 4/5 (Spring/Summer 1995): 72-81.

In the realm of politics, the Polish Right occasionally looked to Spanish history for inspiration. For instance, in the late 1930s, true to the extremist spirit of the times, a leading nationalists invoked Spain in an anti-Jewish diatribe: "the national camp shall solve the Jewish question in Poland just as in 1492 the Queen Isabela solved the same question in Spain."[25] His more radical colleague, Jan Mosdorf, also advocated forced Jewish emigration from Poland, explaining that "since the time of Isabela the Catholic no other way has been invented to get rid of the Jews without their will and without the financial ruin of the state."[26] However, these parallels were employed undoubtedly because the outbreak of the Civil War in Spain in 1936 made Spanish analogies relevant. This conflict ignited a storm of controversy in Poland about the Spanish Right. Predictably, Polish public opinion was divided.

The political scene in Poland between 1936 and 1939 was quite complex. To simplify, the Left consisted of liberals, populists, socialists, and communists of Polish, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Jewish, and German

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[25] Jędrzej Giertych, *O wyjście z kryzysu* (Warszawa: No publisher, 1938), 249 [afterward *O wyjście*].

[26] Jan Mosdorf, *Wczoraj i jutro* (Warszawa: Prosto z Mostu, 1938), 171.

ethnicity. The much more influential Polish Right included nationalists, national radicals, conservatives, monarchists, Right-wing populists, and the *Sanacja* (*sanatio*, i.e. cleansing) movement of military and technocratic followers of the dictator Marshal Piłsudski. Ethnic minorities had their own parties both on the Left and Right.[27]

The Left in Poland, of course, opposed the Spanish Right, while the Polish Right supported its Spanish equivalent. However, whereas the Left often succumbed to simplistic stereotypes regarding the supporters of General Francisco Franco y Bahamonde, the Polish Right made an effort to discern between various component parts of the Nationalist coalition. The Polish Rightists extolled the deeds of their Spanish counterparts, while delving into their ideology at least to a certain extent. Finally, for both Polish Right and Left the question of foreign policy, especially the Soviet and German threats, were of paramount consideration.

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[27] On Poland's interwar history see Richard Watt, *Bitter Glory: Poland and Its Fate, 1918-1939* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979); Edward D. Wynot, Jr., *Polish Politics in Transition: The Camp of National Unity and the Struggle for Power, 1935-1939* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1974); Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski, *Najnowsza historia polityczna Polski, Tom Drugi: 1914-1939* (London: Gryf, 1985); Władysław Konopczyński, *Historia polityczna Polski, 1914-1939* (Warszawa: Inicjatywa Wydawnicza "Ad Astra," 1995).

The Nationalists

The Polish nationalist movement, or more precisely the National Democratic orientation (*Endecja*, *Endek*), was the largest right-wing formation in Poland. It had an older, liberal strain, and a younger, radical one. In the middle of the 1930s, several groups of young activists abandoned the powerful National Party (*Stronnictwo Narodowe – SN*). A minority of these dissenters joined the government forces of the *Sanacja*. Others formed the National Radical Camp (*Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny -- ONR*), which subsequently split into the ONR-ABC group and the National Radical Movement (*Ruch Narodowo-Radykalny -- RNR*), popularly known as the "Falanga" after the title of its main periodical.[28]

The *Endeks* were anti-German, anti-Communist, anti-liberal, and anti-Jewish. Their anti-Semitism was mostly "Christian-conservative" rather than "racialist," according to standards introduced by the liberal

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[28] See Piotr S. Wandycz, "Fascism in Poland: 1918-1939," in *Native Fascism in the Successor States, 1918-1945*, edited by Peter F. Sugar (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 1971), 92-97; Szymon Rudnicki, *Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny: Geneza i działalność* (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1985) [afterward *Obóz*].

scholar Peter Pulzer. He has shown that "the two cleavages overlap to a considerable degree," but that the "Christian-conservative" brand of anti-Semitism did not advocate extermination of the Jews.[29] In Poland, "Christian-conservatives," or more properly "national-Christians," at the extreme advocated expulsion of Jews and ghettoization of those who remained. According to a contemporary Jewish account,

> the nationalists... had great psychological and other difficulties in accepting the ideas of Fascism and Nazism... They were not revolutionaries like the Nazis in Germany: they were old-fashioned reactionaries. They were active in organizing economic boycotts, but they would not encourage physical pogroms. They were for a *numerus clausus* at the universities, but were not for closing them completely to non-Catholic, Polish citizens... They were in favor of establishing two classes of citizens with different political rights, but were not for taking these rights away completely from any group. They were ready... to inflict severe wounds... on any semblance of liberal parliamentary democracy, but they also accepted... the existence of political parties representing all shades of opinion (with the exception of the communist party). Their cultural chauvinism was mitigated by the traditional respect and admiration for... Europe's Latin culture... The Nationalist party could never really become monolithic and totalitarian in its

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[29] Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), xiii [afterward *Rise*].

philosophy. Loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church was a basic feature of the party image.[30]

More recently, an author of a study published under the auspices of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw has argued that "antisemitic statements of... the Endeks show them as convinced conservatives. Their ideal remained the patriarchal-feudal social relations from the beginning of the 19th century."[31] The scholar concluded that racism was of negligible importance to the *Endek* thought. Moreover, as Professor Stanley Payne has perceptively noted, Catholicism (and not a “nation” or a “race”) was the most important point of reference even for the most extreme of Polish nationalists.[32]

Catholic universalism assured that even the most radical strain of the National Democratic movement disavowed racism. In a direct challenge

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[30] Lucjan Blit, *The Eastern Pretender: Bolesław Piasecki, His Life and Times* (London: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1965), 38-39 [afterward *The Eastern Pretender*]. The author was a member of the Jewish socialist Bund.

[31] Bohdan Halczak, "Cele polityki endeckiej wobec mniejszości żydowskiej w Polsce w latach 1919-1939," *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* [Warsaw] 175-178 (July 1995-June 1996): 42 [afterward "Cele"].

[32] Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 262.

to the dialectical theory of the race struggle advocated by the chief Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg, the leading Polish national-radical ("Falanga") ideologue Wojciech Wasiutyński stated flatly that "race struggle does not constitute the essence of history. Racism is a variety of historical materialism and therefore it is irreconciable with true idealism."[33] Instead, the RNR ("Falanga") advocated a Catholic totalitarianism. In 1935, its leader, Bolesław Piasecki, stressed that "God is the highest aim for a man. Working for the nation is the path to God. Man's happiness is in the creation of the greatness of the nation."[34] Thus, the chiliastic ideology of Piasecki's group differed from its Spanish namesake. However, besides the name, the youthful composition of his party, the beige shirts, and the "Roman salute" with an extended hand, Piasecki's group likewise advocated and practiced violence in the streets. Was the Spanish *Falange* its inspiration in this respect? Perhaps. More likely, however, it was the youthful impatience with the economic,

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[33] Wojciech Wasiutyński, *Z duchem czasu* (Warszawa: Biblioteka "Prosto z mostu," 1936), 55.

[34] Piasecki quoted in Wasiutyński, *Czwarte*, 50.

political, and social crisis that gripped Poland in the 1930s.[35] As its chief ideologue Wojciech Wasiutyński put it, "the Falanga was never called the 'Falanga'. Its name was not modeled after the Spanish fascist organization. The 'Falanga' was the title of the periodical, which, more or less by accident, became the organ of the group."[36]

How did the Spanish Right figure in the National Democratic discourse? At first, it surfaced in ruminations about the similarities between Poland and Spain. Then, the references to the Spanish Right appeared in debates about the Catholic and anti-Communist social system of government which the Polish Nationalists hoped to build at home.

Already at the beginning of the 20th century, Roman Dmowski discovered a palpable similarity between the disastrous situation of Poland following the defeat of the anti-Russian January Rising of 1863 and the dramatic predicament of Spain after its rout by the United States in 1898.

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[35] See Blit, *The Eastern Pretender*, 29-73; Wojciech Wasiutyński, *Źródła niepodległości* (London: Instytut Romana Dmowskiego, 1977), 102-103; Włodzimierz Sznarbachowski, *300 lat wspomnień* (London: Aneks, 1997), 122-161; Antoni Dudek and Grzegorz Pytel, *Bolesław Piasecki, Próba biografii politycznej* (London: Aneks, 1990), 9-103.

[36] Wojciech Wasiutyński, *Prawą stroną labiryntu: Fragmenty wspomnień* (Gdańsk: Exter, 1996), 101 [afterward *Prawą*].

In both cases, each nation reassessed its mistakes and withdrew into its core to regain strength.[37] However, in a separate inquiry in 1905, Dmowski was worried about what he perceived as the ultramontane tendencies of the Catholic Church in Spain. He wrote

> If antireligious and cosmopolitan radicalism has been making the greatest conquest in the Latin countries, it is because their clergy is overly Roman [i.e. ultramontane], exceedingly oriented outside of the nation in its morality, [and] excessively indifferent to national matters [and] civic duties. Nowhere do the freemasonic lodges multiply as much as in a nationally incoherent environment. Spain, 'the most faithful daughter of the Church,' is in imminent danger of falling prey to masonry and, consequently, the Jews. The blame for this shall fall on the Church policy and the local clergy that have made so many efforts to subordinate the state and the national idea to the views of the Church and, thus, it [the clergy] contributed to the disorganization of the national instinct.[38]

Later, any comments this critical of the Church would be unthinkable for an *Endek*. After 1917, the National Democrats argued that

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[37] Fountain, *Roman*, 97.

[38] Roman Dmowski, "Podstawy polityki polskiej," *Przegląd Wszechpolski* 7 (1905): 359 quoted in Ks. Dariusz Sawicki, *Roman Dmowski a Kościół* (Warszawa: Burchard Edition, 1996), 61. See also Roman Dmowski, *Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka* (Warszawa, 1933), 242-243 quoted in Olaf Bergman, *Narodowa Demokracja wobec problematyki żydowskiej w latach 1918-1929* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 1998), 333.

Christianity and Western civilization faced mortal peril. Many of their defenders turned to faith for strength. The erstwhile RNR ("Falanga") firebrand Wojciech Wasiutyński recalled that

> At the time... a phenomenon occurred, which was not exclusively Polish, but which manifested itself most powerfully in Poland: namely, the renaissance of Catholicism among the educated youth. After the First World War in the Catholic countries, France, Italy, and Spain, a reaction was born against atheism and materialism that culminated in bolshevism. A search for spiritual values commenced along with borrowing from an older national tradition. New Catholic literature appeared: Péguy, Mauriac, Bernanos in France, Greene, Waugh, Bruce-Marshall in Great Britain. This rebirth of religion... rose on... a nationalistic wave.[39]

This Catholic universalism was what tied the Polish Nationalists to their Spanish counterparts most tangibly. There were other reasons as well to concentrate on the Iberian Peninsula. According to the Polish historian Krzysztof Kawalec, "the increase in interest in Spain and Portugal was inevitable after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. Additionally, it was

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[39] Wasiutyński, *Czwarte*, 48.

encouraged by the perception of a cultural and economic kinship."[40] In fact, as far as emulating political models, the *Endeks* focused more on the established regime of Antonio Salazar in Portugal, rather than on Francisco Franco's, which was still in the making. Finally, the Polish Nationalists viewed themselves as part of the pan-European counteroffensive against Communism, liberalism, and modernism. Thus, the the extremist utterances of Poland's (and Europe's) Christian nationalists arose in this pre-Holocaust context.

In 1938 Jędrzej Giertych, a leader of an extreme nationalist orientation, "the young" group (*młodzi*) within the National Party, stated that "we represent the only Polish nationalism. We are one of these movements that – like fascism in Italy, Hitlerism in Germany, the camp of Salazar in Portugal, *Carlism and the Falange in Spain* – are overthrowing in their respective countries of Europe the old masonic-plutocratic-socialist-Jewish system and are building a new order: a national order

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[40] Krzysztof Kawalec, *Narodowa Demokracja wobec faszyzmu, 1922-1939: Ze studiów nad dziejami myśli politycznej obozu narodowego* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1989), 191 [afterwards *Narodowa*].

[emphasis added]."[41] In a similar vein, a nationalist literary critic admonished Poland's poets:

> Poets find themselves between a hammer and an anvil... The alien, aggressive society is the hammer, and the so-called reality is the anvil. And the reality of the 20th century is Italian fascism, the seizure of Vienna [by the Nazis], and *the Spanish war*. These are such incendiary facts that, through their mere presence, they have already created a legend. However, the poets either turned away from the legend or they failed to understand its reality [emphasis added].[42]

The literary historian Maciej Urbankowski argues that the above was an attack on the preference for the imaginary over the real. He has observed that many liberal poets "scorned the most tangible Polish reality, escaping into the exotic world of their own ego, creating contrived, fantastic countries, the fictitiousness of which sharply contrasted with the catastrophes of the times."[43] By contrast, the nationalist Christian poets

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[41] Giertych, *O wyjście*, 31.

[42] Jerzy Pietrkiewicz, "Niech żyje liryka imperialistyczna!" *Kronika Polski i świata* 19 (1938) quoted in Maciej Urbankowski, *Nacjonalistyczna krytyka literacka: Próba rekonstrukcji i opisu nurtu w II Rzeczypospolitej* (Kraków: Arcana, 1997), 97 [afterward *Nacjonalistyczna*].

[43] Urbankowski, *Nacjonalistyczna*, 97.

rose to the occasion. They defended Poland's tradition and its Catholic culture. Poetic references to the Civil War in Spain served the Polish nationalist end. For instance, the youthful poets Konstanty Dobrzyński and Artur Chojecki celebrated the defense of the Alcázar of Toledo by the Whites against the Reds in 1936. More subtly, a poet of the older generation, Tytus Czyżewski, bewailed the fate of Catholic Spain in his poem about Zaragoza:[44]

zamilknie miasto
przemówi dzwonem
gołębim skrzydłem
kwiatem jaśminu
Zaragoza Zaragoza
różową falą
pasmem kadzidła
twarzą Madonny
jagodą czarną
Zaragoza Zaragoza
Goya z portretu
wojny dalekiej
dalekiej trumny
śmierci we fraku
Zaragoza Zaragoza

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[44] Tytus Czyżewski, "Zaragoza Zaragoza," *Poezja Polska, 1914-1939: Antologia, Volume 1*, edited by Ryszard Matuszewski and Seweryn Pollak (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1984), 1: 276-277 [afterward *Poezja*].

już na arenie
miasta Seniory
ożyły kwiaty
pasma korali
Zaragoza Zaragoza
z lilii Corrida
dłonie z jaśminu
szukały pereł
jagód czerwonych
Zaragoza Zaragoza
znalazły pluszu
krwawiące róże
rzęsy motyle
oczy Madonny
Zaragoza Zaragoza

The town shall fall silent
it will speak with a bell
a wing of the dove
a flower of jasmin
Zaragoza Zaragoza
with a pink wave
a smudge of frankincense
the face of Madonna
a black berry
Zaragoza Zaragoza
Goya from a portrait
of a far away war
of a far away coffin
of death in coattails
Zaragoza Zaragoza
already at the arena
of the city the Señoras sit

the flowers have revived
strings of beads
Zaragoza Zaragoza
the Corrida of lilies
the hands of jasmin
looked for the pearls
of red berries
Zaragoza Zaragoza
they found
the bleeding plush roses
the eyelashes of butterflies
the eyes of Madonna
Zaragoza Zaragoza

For the *Endecja*, the war in Spain was not just an excuse to settle the scores with their political adversaries in Poland. The National Democrats were unabashed in their championship of the Spanish Nationalist cause because they identified with it. After all, even General Franco sounded like one of them. "We are fighting to free our nation from the influences of Marxism and international Communism which have been introduced [here]... by Muscovite Bolshevism," he proclaimed in July 1937.[45] Further, Franco announced in December 1937 that: "Our State must be a

[45] See Augustín del Río Cisneros, ed., *Pensamiento político de Franco: antología* (Madrid: Servicio Informativo Español, 1964), 33 [afterward *Pensamiento*].

Catholic State, both socially and culturally, because the true Spain has always been, continues to be, and will be profoundly Catholic."[46]

Such statements could not but influence the Polish Right in general and the National Democrats in particular. Therefore the nationalist press consistently depicted Spain as a victim of "international Bolshevism" and demanded that Poland's government assist the Nationalist side. In July 1936, the *Warszawski Dziennik Narodowy* (Warsaw National Daily) greeted the uprising in Spain as a defense against attempts of the international Communism and "Jewry" to prevent "the renaissance of Europe undertaken by nationalism."[47] The periodical *Merkuriusz Polski Ordynaryjny* (Polish Ordinary Mercury) concentrated on disparaging the International Brigades. Other papers clamored for diplomatic recognition of Nationalist Spain. In November 1936 an *Endek* daily demanded that "at least the governments of those states which are not under the overwhelming influence of Masonic lodges that are hostile to the Spanish nation should follow in the footsteps of Rome and Berlin, recognizing the

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[46] del Río Cisneros, *Pensamiento*, 207.

[47] *Warszawski Dziennik Narodowy*, 24 July 1936.

regime in Burgos as the legitimate one."[48] However, the Nazi intervention in Spain on the White side notwithstanding, the *Endecja* never lost sight of the German threat to Poland. According to a youth organ of the SN,

> For political reasons... it would be injurious for us if the Germans attained a permanent and sure ally in Nationalist Spain simply because it would strengthen their position vis-á-vis France... For ideological reasons we cannot desire the communization of Spain because we think that it would lead to spreading communism throughout Europe, or, in the best case scenario, to an armed clash between Germany and Russia, which would put Poland in a very difficult position, first politically and then militarily. We shall not repeat here the arguments made several times already that victory for the Nationalists in Spain will calm Europe down and will prevent her from forming of the so-called ideological blocs.[49]

France was Poland's ally. Although the National Party in Poland disliked immensely the leftist government of France, the Endeks still preferred that country over Germany. Therefore by 1939 the right-wing press began voicing its concerns about the possibility of Spain joining

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[48] *Warszawski Dziennik Narodowy*, 7 November 1936.

[49] *Wszechpolak*, 14 January 1937, in Kawalec, *Narodowa*, 203-204.

Hitler's coalition.[50] Kazimierz Kowalski, one of the most prominent *Endek* leaders, admitted that

> It would be a real tragedy for us, if we were to find ourselves in a camp opposite to Nationalist Spain and Fascist Italy... However, I must state that currently the German threat is our primary issue. These who will fight against the Germans will be our allies. Those who will support the Germans will be our enemies.[51]

This reaction of course stemmed from geopolitics rather than ideology. The Polish Nationalist affinity with the Spanish Right continued.

Giertych's *Heroic Spain*

The affinity between Spanish and Polish Right was perhaps best expressed by a leading National Democrat, Jędrzej Giertych, who visited Spain in 1937. His account of the visit, *Hiszpania bohaterska* (Heroic

[50] See *ABC* [Warszawa], 29 December 1936; *Warszawski Dziennik Narodowy*, 31 July 1936 and 11 August 1939; *Myśl Narodowa*, 14 May 1939.

[51] Kazimierz Kowalski, *Polska wobec Niemiec* (Warszawa, 1939) quoted in Rudnicki, *Obóz*, 378.

Spain), is perhaps the single most important analysis of the Spanish Right written by a contemporary Polish observer. His opinions are also significant because they provide the proper pre-Holocaust context to his shocking anti-Jewish statements and his controversial remarks about the German Nazis, Italian Fascists, and members of other such movements.[52]

Giertych scorned the fashionable pretense of journalistic "objectivity" and took sides openly. He immediately informed his readers that

> The issue I would like to talk about foremostly is the greatness, depth, and beauty of the surge of the Nationalist Spain. I am under a strong impression of this tension of national and religious feelings, which bears every characteristic feature of a crusade. For me the sojourn in the Nationalist Spain was as if an immersion in a revitalizing bath. This was an immersion in an atmosphere so sublime, so noble, so beautiful. This was an ambiance where the faith in God and the desire to serve Him joins with the love for the Fatherland, with the passion for the tradition and for the spirit, with the readiness for the supreme sacrifice for God and Fatherland, and at the same time with the manly will and ability to perform [heroic] deeds. This atmosphere causes one to become a better human being and to be more prepared to spring into action.[53]

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[52] Jędrzej Giertych, *Hiszpania bohaterska* (Warszawa: Ossolineum, 1937) [afterward *Hiszpania*].

[53] Ibid., 10-11.

To make the conflict in Spain more accessible to the Polish reader, Giertych made frequent analogies to domestic issues. He emphasized Spain's Catholicism; he stressed aesthetic and cultural similarities;[54] and he compared the Spanish conflict to the Polish-Bolshevik war, the anti-Russian January Rising of 1863, and other events in Polish history. The Communist threat loomed large over Giertych's narrative. He praised the youth of the Nationalist fighters who were just like the Polish high-schoolers facing the Red Army before Warsaw. There was no sense wondering why the Moroccan Moors fought on the Catholic side against the Republican bloc. After all, the Polish Muslims (Tartars) struggled in the ranks of the Polish army against the Bolsheviks as well. To drive home his point about the Soviet threat, Giertych even went so far as to dismiss the anarchists as insignificant and to single out the Communists as the

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[54] Giertych recorded his first impression of the Spaniards as follows: "all of them walk around and talk vivaciously. But neither Oriental nor even Italian loudness and body language are in sight. The bearing, the gestures, and the voice of this [Spanish] congregation are marked by a peculiar and extremely characteristic moderation, a sort of elegance, courtly affability, and decorum which combines with vivaciousness. One feels that this is a nation of the hidalgos. There is something enticing, simply enchanting in this Spanish congregation. It is beautiful; it is vivacious, and it arouses interest with its lively hum. Finally, it is well mannered." See ibid., 16-17.

chief culprits of the Civil War. In his description of insurgent Spain, Giertych dwelt on stories of Spanish Nationalist heroism at Somosierra, Seville, and, especially, Toledo. He assured his readers that the Nationalist side was responsible only for justifiable reprisals that were triggerred by an orgy of murder by the revolutionaries. Nothing excited the Polish collective imagination as tales of valor. Nothing enraged the Polish public more than tales of atrocities against priests, nuns, and civilians, and outrages against women in particular.

Moreover, Giertych advised against considering the conflict on the Iberian Penninsula solely through the prism of great power politics. According to him, the Civil War was a Communist revolution that could be stopped only by a pre-emptive "national revolution." The army had started the uprising, but the revolution was being carried out by a joint effort of the military and Rightist political parties. Giertych identified the army, the Falange, and the Carlists as the most important forces in Nationalist Spain. The Alfonsine loyalists were insignificant and the Christian democratic followers of José María Gil Robles could at best be credited with preparing the atmosphere for the uprising and at worst

accused of succumbing to Kerensky-like tendencies in their ranks prior to 1936.

Giertych praised the effectiveness of the army, but stressed that the military was devoid of the ideology necessary to fight against the revolution. Therefore, he suggested that a union between political and military forces was necessary. The Carlists had the soundest and firmest set of beliefs that the Nationalist coalition could base itself upon: Catholicism and monarchism. However, Carlist weakness came from its regionalism and provincialism. Giertych claimed that they had no followers in the cities and ignored the problems of the working class. On the other hand, the Falange had a well developed social program upon which the coalition could draw. Also, the Falange had the manpower, although often of dubious quality. Giertych even quoted approvingly a Right-wing Spaniard who said that "the whole red scum" (*toda la canalla roja*) joined the Falange after the outbreak of the rising.[55] In fact, the ideological division was reflected in regional loyalties: "The Nationalists in the north have nationalism in their blood and instinct. The Nationalists

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[55] Ibid., 326.

in the south, aside from a small number, came to nationalism through [political] agitation. Today they believe in Franco and the Falange. But what if things change?"[56] Giertych further observed that

> A typical Falangist is a man who has been convinced by the others about the correctness of the national idea. And a Carlist is simply a nationalist. For instance, I am a Pole and there is no way for me to become a Norwegian or a Chinese. It is the same with a Carlist. There is no way that he could turn himself into a Bolshevik. He can be either satisfied or dissatisfied with his leaders [and] his party and its politics but he will not stop being a Carlist, just like I will not stop being a Pole, no matter how dissatisfied I am with the Polish government, Polish politics, and the current face of the Polish nation. However, an average Falangist, if he is alienated by the Falange, will abandon it – even to join the Commies.[57]

Soon enough, Giertych identified his favorite organization on the Spanish Right:

> I have ascertained that there is a striking similarity and kinship between Carlism and our National Party.
>
> Above all, the spiritual character of both movements is related. When I talk with a Hitlerite, an [Italian] fascist, a

[56] Ibid., 88.

[57] Ibid., 324.

> member of the 'Action Française', even with a Portuguese nationalist, I have the feeling that I speak with a man who is alien to me. His world view reveals many common points with mine, but it is not my world view. On the other hand, when talking with a Carlist, I have a feeling that I speak with a man whose *opinions* can differ from mine in some cases (one does not always agree on [certain] points even with the closest political and personal friend!), but with whom I share an identical basis for a world view. Neither his nor my religious emotions are overwhelmed by nationalist passions, as is the case with the [Italian] fascists, French nationalists, and, especially, the Hitlerites, but they [i.e. nationalist passions] are based upon religious emotions. On the other hand, neither his nor my religious, Catholic, emotions reveal themselves in the 'Christian democratic' softness, tolerance, and indulgence. Instead, they display a tough character, ringing with the armed steel of the Crusades rather than the buzz of frequent and opportunistic platitudes mouthed by the so-called Catholic politicians. Both he [the Carlist] and I are equally averse to 'modernity', to the ideology of the 19th century, to pseudo-progress, to the spirit of masonry and Jewry, to liberalism and radicalism, to Marxism, [and] to capitalism, the 'modern' economic system, which was formed in congruence with the Jewish ways [emphasis in the original].[58]

What else attracted Giertych to the Carlists? According to his observations, it was the regionalism and decentralization they preached:

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[58] Ibid., 148-149.

At first glance it is incomprehensible how a party that represents... Spanish nationalism in the most extreme manner can be based, at least to a certain degree, on a 'national minority.' However, there is nothing unnatural about this. First, the Basques are not 'a national minority;' they are not a separate nation... A greater part of the Basques are simply Spanish patriots. They are simply Spaniards, who use in their everyday local and family life a separate regional dialect... The Basques are for the Spanish nation the same as the Lithuanians were for the Polish nation 50 years ago. If no one is surprised that the Lithuanian people took part *en masse* in the [Polish] rising of 1863, there should be no reason to be baffled that the Basque people took part *en masse* in the Carlist rising in Navarra in 1936.

And second, Carlism is after all not nationalism of a centralistic type that does not recognize local differences.

It is very wrong to view nationalism as something inalienably joined to state centralism. In its nature, nationalism aims at a strong state, meaning that it should be able to resist foreign threats and to crush degenerative domestic trends. It means that [the state should] have a strong army, a full treasury, an effective executive, and so forth. But nationalism does not favor the *omnipotence* of the state. Socialism and other trends, which dominated in the 19th century, gave the state the right to interfere in the private and economic life of the individual, and levelled all regional, local, and class differences that had been created by history. In contrast, nationalism is more of a return to the individual, society, region, and locality of greater freedom [from the state](of course with the exception of [the Italian] fascism and Hitlerism) [emphasis in the original].[59]

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[59] Ibid., 156-157.

As Giertych discussed analogies between the Spanish and Polish Right, he averred that Poland's National Party shared its ideology with the Carlists but its dynamism and strength with the Falangists:

> A comparison has been made in Warsaw between the Spanish situation and the Polish one to the effect that the Carlists are an equivalent of the National Party and that the [Spanish] Falange is the equivalent of our O.N.R. [the National Radical Camp].
>
> Leaving aside for the time being the comparison of the National Party with Carlism, one must state that the comparison with the O.N.R. deprecates the [Spanish] Falange. The O.N.R. could aspire to be equal to this dynamic Spanish organization only if it had behind it a heroic period of struggle against the Communists (already before the outbreak of the uprising), with tens, or even hundreds of [the national-radical activists] fallen and, at the same time, with enormous amount of casualties inflicted upon the adversary. [The O.N.R. could aspire to be equal to the Falange] if it were an organization with structures in the entire country, not only in the capital [Warsaw], and if it grew during this real, difficult struggle.
>
> Despite that, there is a grain of truth in the comparison between the Falange and the O.N.R. The O.N.R. would be like it in Poland, if there were propitious conditions for great growth of a political nationalist organization and, at the same time, the National Party were incapable (as Carlism is), because of its characteristics, to carry out a wide but

> superficial recruiting action, that is if [the SN] were unable to take advantage of the propitious conditions.
>
> The masses, which are nationalistically predisposed, would use then the prepared organizational framework of the O.N.R. but they would overwhelm their bosses and leaders, giving the entire movement a different and spontaneous character and selecting new leaders from among their ranks.
>
> In Poland the conditions are different. The inferior forces, like those who joined the Falange in Spain, have concentrated in the Sanacja in Poland. The superior forces have joined the National Party.
>
> *Our National Party is both Carlism and the Falange at the same time* [emphasis added].[60]

Giertych then proposed a joint manifest destiny for Spain and Poland. After the victory, he advised, Nationalist Spain should expand into Africa and spread Catholic civilization throughout the continent. That would reverse the gains of Protestant England. Poland had a similar role to play in Eastern Europe where it was to check Germany and to defeat Soviet Russia. According to Giertych, "I cannot shrug off an impression that one more historical mission awaits Spain: the mission to convert and civilize Africa. Poland's historical mission will be to play a similar role on the territories where the Christian faith and culture were exterminated by

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[60] Ibid., 342.

Bolshevism."[61] The author was convinced that "Poland has been and will be the bulwark of Christianity in the East. Spain had been and would be the same bulwark in the southwest."[62] Finally, as to the Nazi danger, Giertych believed that Hitler's involvement in Spain signified Germany's desire to regain its colonies in Africa. Of course, he felt it was better for the Germans to land in Africa than to invade Poland.

Such views about Spain, as expressed by the National Democrats in general and Giertych in particular, found a sympathetic reception on the Polish Right. Without strictly identifying with any particular part of the Nationalist coalition, the Polish Right expressed enthusiastic support for its struggle. The Catholic Church in Poland also joined in the defense of Spanish Catholics, their institutions, and their military champions.

The Church and the War

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[61] Ibid., 266.

[62] Ibid., 20.

The hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Poland conformed its position on the Civil War in Spain to the directives of the Vatican. However, among the lower clergy, national peculiarities, informed by recent Polish history, asserted themselves squarely in favor of the Spanish Right.

Even before the Civil War broke out in Spain, the Catholic Church in Poland was concerned about anti-clerical violence, church burning, and the anti-Christian rhetoric of the Spanish revolutionaries. This attention to the affairs of Spain surfaced in Catholic discourse, including poetry. For instance, during the Easter holidays of 1935 Father Józef Jarzębowski dedicated a part of his Cassandric poem, "A Prayer to Five Wounds", to a Catholic and traditionalist Spain:[63]

Jezu Chryste…
I przygarnij swą ręką lewą
rycerską, dumną Hiszpanię,
Niech srebrzyste dzwony Sewilli
rozproszą opar czerwony
upiornej gwiazdy – pięciornicy.
Niech błękitna Madonna Murilla

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[63] Ks. Józef Jarzębowski MIC, "Modlitwa do Pięciu Ran," *Podbipięta* (The Easter Edition 1935) in Ks. Józef Jarzębowski, *Pieśń bezimiennego Krzyżowca* (London: Katolicki Ośrodek Wydawniczy Veritas, 1970), 44-46.

pobłogosławi szpady kute w Toledo,
a bohaterski Cyd
stanie na straży Pirenej
zasłuchany w mistyczną pieśń
Don Calderona de la Barca.

Jesus Christ...
Embrace with your left arm
Chivalrous, proud Spain.
May the silvery bells of Seville
Disperse the red fumes
Of the ghastly five-pointed star.
May the blue Madonna of Murilló
Bless the swords forged in Toledo.
And let the heroic Cid
Stand guard at the Pyrenees,
Listening to the mystical song of
Don Calderón de la Barca.

After July 1936, the Polish Church was spurred to act by the tales of anti-Catholic atrocities, sacrilege, and arson.[64] According to the liberal American theologian Ronald Modras, "Polish periodicals aimed at priests

[64] In 1937 it was reported in Poland that the revolutionaries killed about 16,000 priests and many more lay Catholic activists. According to post-war calculations, 6,832 priests and nuns died in Spain. See Giertych, *Hiszpania*, 199; Antonio Montero Moreno, *Historia de la persecución religiosa en España, 1936-1939* (Madrid: BAC, 1961), 758-768.

gave particular attention to the Spanish bishops' letter on the civil war."[65] Since the letter called for a crusade against revolutionary evil, the Polish clergy responded favorably, also for anti-Communist reasons.[66]

In July 1936, the Franciscan *Mały Dziennik* (Little Diary) praised the Spanish King and the benevolent dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera, juxtaposing their rule with that of the "tyranny of the Left" and the "Masonic-Red Terror." Obviously, the Kremlin was behind the revolution in Spain.[67] Most Spaniards supported the Nationalists. Therefore, could one "even compare the abuses of fascism to the anarchy in Spain and the crimes of the Communists?" marveled the Franciscans.[68] In July 1938, the *Mały Dziennik* informed its readers that "the Spanish nationalist army is fighting for the very life and being of the Spanish nation which Jews have

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[65] Ronald Modras, *The Catholic Church and Antisemitism: Poland, 1933-1939* (Chur, Switzerland: Published for the Vidal Sasoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism (SICSA), the Hebrew University of Jerusalem by Harwood Academic Publishers, 1994), 166 [afterward *The Catholic Church*].

[66] The letter was published in Polish in *Wiadomości Archidiecezjalne Warszawskie* (1937): 494-505. It was excerpted and described in *Ateneum Kapłańskie* 40 (1937): 405-10. For the Spanish original see Ricardo de la Cierva, ed., *Los Documentos de la primavera trágica: análisis documental de los antecedentes inmediatos del 18 de Julio de 1936* (Madrid: Secretaria General Técnica, Sección de Estudios sobre la Guerra de España, 1967), 640-658.

[67] *Mały Dziennik*, 19 July 1936, quoted in Modras, *The Catholic Church*, 166-167.

[68] *Mały Dziennik*, 25 July 1936, quoted in Modras, *The Catholic Church*, 166-167.

wanted to enslave." The paper approvingly quoted Juan Serrat, Jr., the emissary of the Nationalist Spain in Warsaw, "who linked Spain's civil war with the 1920 Soviet invasion of Poland."[69]

Other Church papers voiced similar sentiments.[70] Usually restrained and intellectual, the Jesuit *Przegląd Powszechny* (Universal Review) ran lurid depictions of the leftist atrocities in Spain. According to Modras, its editor-in-chief Father Jan Count Rostworowski

> was incensed that the Polish [leftist] press was defending the Spanish government and accusing the Franco uprising of being a revolt against lawful authority. Is it a revolt, he asked, to offer armed resistance against a band of thieves and murderers? Is it not rather a revolt to thrust the horror of communism on a people whose vast majority is Catholic? Trustworthy sources assured the Jesuit editor that 'cruelty, crime, and all sorts of atrocities were to be found exclusively in the Red camp,' whereas in the camp of the uprising there were no more than 'acts of perhaps severe but necessary repression.' He was also assured that the vast majority of Spanish people greeted the liberating armies of the nationalists with enthusiasm.
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> The crimes of Spain's communists, Rostworowski continued, awakened realization of the need for a united front

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[69] *Mały Dziennik*, 23 July 1938 quoted in Modras, *The Catholic Church*, 170-171.

[70] See *Głos Narodu*, 20 August 1936; *Wiara i Życie* 17 (1937); *Wiadomości Archidiecezjalne Warszawskie* 26 (1936); *Mały Dziennik*, 12 and 14 August 1936; *Przegląd Powszechny* 209 (October 1936); *Ateneum Kapłańskie* 38 (1936).

> against the 'Red plague'. It did not matter whether this united front was fascist or not, because communism was 'the greatest enemy humanity has ever had' along with its misguided and perverse partisans and defenders. Rostworowski criticized the Polish government for tolerating the left wing-press. Communist agitation was everywhere, and the not too distant future would see a massive struggle between the church and the communist antichrist. Nonetheless, the Jesuit had no illusions about Nazi Germany. In a war between the swastika and Soviet star, the church could not expect anything but persecution. One should not expect Satan to drive out Satan.[71]

Similar sentiments reverberated from the pulpit. According to Modras, in October 1936, Father Franciszek Kwiatkowski preached that Nationalist Spain

> is bleeding for the whole world. 'On its victory or defeat hangs in great measure the collapse or triumph of the Red minions of the Antichrist.' Spain's civil war was religious more than political. In former times Spain struggled against the foreign invasion of the Muslims. 'Today it suffers foreign invasion once again, by the atheist Masonic-Jewish-Bolshevik enemy.' The Nationalists, like the Maccabees, were waging a holy war in defense of God and fatherland.[72]

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[71] Jan Rostworowski in *Przegląd Powszechny*, 211 (December 1936): 370-371, paraphrased by Modras, *The Catholic Church*, 168-169.

[72] Father Franciszek Kwiatkowski in *Nowa Biblioteka Kaznodziejska* (1936): 387-389, paraphrased by Modras, *The Catholic Church*, 171-172.

At first, commenting on Hitler's involvement in the war, Father Jan Piwowarczyk, the editor-in-chief of Cracow's Catholic periodical *Głos Narodu* (Voice of the Nation), averred that "it is a matter of indifference to us who is fighting against Communism so long as he is victorious."[73] Yet, the Catholic hierarchy was not blind to the foreign policy considerations of the Civil War in Spain. In December 1936 the Primate of Poland, August Cardinal Hlond, warned about the international implications of the conflict and stressed the Soviet threat to the European peace: "the Civil War was unleashed because of a direct threat to the Sovietization of that country and may engulf all of Europe only if Moscow manages to involve the [great] powers in the Spanish tragedy."[74]

In the context of the press debate about the war in Spain, on September 27, 1936, the *Mały Dziennik* quoted with approval a top

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[73] See Chodakiewicz, *Zagrabiona*, 88. The editor-in-chief of this paper, Father Jan Piwowarczyk, and many of his journalists supported the Christian Democrats and the *Endeks*.

[74] *Kurier Warszawski*, 11 December 1936.

Vatican diplomat, Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli (later Pope Pius XII), concerning Poland:

> As once your fatherland defended the nations of the West from the Muslim horde, so now it appears that your noble nation has been singled out by a particular decree of Providence to be a safeguarding bulwark to defend Western civilization against the barbarism of the North-east and its wretched, insane doctrine, which attempts in a perverse way to destroy private property for the benefit of the commune and even dares to blaspheme insolently the majesty of God.[75]

The implication was clear: Poland and Spain were Catholic sisters in the struggle against godless Communism. Not surprisingly, the statements of the Polish episcopate concerning the Spanish tragedy were given prominent space in the official and semi-official government media.[76] Modras argues that "the interpretation the Polish Catholic press gave the Spanish civil war was not idiosyncratic. It was imported from the west," mainly the Vatican.[77] However, the Catholic Church in Poland gave the

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[75] Translated in Modras, *The Catholic Church,* 172.

[76] See *Kurier Warszawski,* 6 and 9 September, and 11 December 1936.

[77] Modras, *The Catholic Church,* 173.

Spanish conflict its own Polish twist. And so did Poland's conservaties, monarchists, Christian democrats, rightist populists, and Piłsudskites.

The non-*Endek* Right and the War

Much of the Polish Right frequently disagreed with its National Democratic colleagues, and, in addition, the Piłsudskites often quarrelled with the Catholic Church. In the case of Spain, however, there was no disagreement, at least in theory. Preliminary research suggests that the Piłsudskite *Sanacja* regime sympathized most directly with the Spanish military, while the other Polish Right-wing groups felt affinity for Spanish parties most akin to them. However, the non-*Endek* Right supported Nationalist Spain in the first place because it considered the question of

Poland's security paramount. A Communist victory in Spain would exacerbate the Soviet threat to Poland.[78]

In September 1936, General Józef Haller, Poland's war hero and a Christian democratic politician, stated that "the struggle initiated in Spain is a part of the offensive of the Bolsheviks against European civilization."[79] The conservative journal *Czas* (Time) of Cracow concurred: "Undoubtedly, it is in the interest of Europe for General Franco to defeat the red terror."[80] On December 29, 1936, Stanisław Cat-Mackiewicz, the editor-in-chief of the monarchist *Słowo* (Word) of Wilno, wrote that:

> Wouldn't we prefer for Franco and Mola alone to defeat the Soviet tanks and the airplanes of Mr. [Leon] Blum, [prime minister of France,] without the assistance of the Krauts? But

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[78] For the conservatives, the situation in Spain was just a part of the European puzzle. In 1937, Count Adolf Bocheński, a brilliant young conservative theorist, averred that the Russian-German animosity was not a constant. "These illusions are particularly harmful which hold that ideological differences between Hitlerism and Communism will not allow these two states to achieve an agreement." Bocheński then predicted the Hitler-Stalin Pact. Therefore, to preempt a German-Russian *rapprochement*, he advised for Warsaw to seek an agreement with Berlin. See Adolf Bocheński, *Między Niemcami a Rosją* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Nałęcz, 1994), 28-29. This work was originally published in 1937 in Warsaw by *Polityka*.

[79] See Chodakiewicz, *Zagrabiona*, 87.

[80] Chodakiewicz, *Zagrabiona*, 88.

> of course yes. But should we switch to the pro-bolshevik camp at the moment of the appearance of the German volunteers on the Spanish territory? Of course not...
>
> All of this is so clear, so banal, [and] so simple. However, let us be allowed to draw from these simple and clear issues a logical conclusion and to yell:
>
> Let German soldiers win in Spain![81]

In 1937 the conservative journal *Myśl Polska* warned that Poland would soon face a similar predicament as Spain, if appropriate steps were not taken to prevent it. The journal prophesised:

> And a similar fate shall befall Poland as the martyred Spain... Mad days of red rage shall come when we shall see our fellows crucified, skinned alive, and destroyed like rats by the thousand... And we shall be weighted down by the yoke of disgrace and guilt for what will have happened which we shall prove incapable of preventing because we have turned out to be people of little spirit. To defend the Cross, it is high time for Torquemada to return to life and stand by us – the great, terrible, [and] merciless Inquisitor! ... Let us not fear; indeed, "it is better that a thousand scoundrels, traitors, and blind fools die than if the entire nation were to be immersed in a bloody flood."[82]

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[81] *Słowo*, 29 December 1936.

[82] Quoted in Marian Zdziechowski, *W obliczu końca* (Warszawa and Ząbki: Fronda and Apostolicum, 1999), 83 [afterwards *W obliczu*]. This work was first published in Wilno in 1937.

In 1937 a leading Christian conservative thinker of a more liberal slant averred that the Red terror in Spain engendered immediate understanding of the revolutionary threat in Poland. Its main thrust was anti-Christian:

> This begins to be understood here. The Spanish events have opened up the eyes of many a person. The war of the Bolsheviks against the Whites [in Russia], despite its antireligious and anticlerical excesses, was a war of two politico-social orders, and the religious factor was not yet of primary importance. However, the war taking place in Spain is a religious war. It is a war that the world has never seen because it has pitted against each other not the followers of the same, albeit differently understood and worshipped, God but rather the followers of Christ and the worshippers of Antichrist.[83]

According to a Communist historian, many newspapers of the center-right and centrist populist (peasantist) sympathies, "took up a position unfavorable to the Spanish Republic."[84] In other words, the

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[83] Zdziechowski, *W obliczu,* 83.

[84] Tadeusz Ćwik, "Społeczeństwo polskie a wojna hiszpańska," *Polacy w wojnie hiszpańskiej (1936-1939),* edited by Michał Bron (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1967), 56-57 [afterwards "Społeczeństwo" in *Polacy*]. Tadeusz Ćwik-Stopczyk was a comissar in the 45th Division of the Spanish Republican Army. See "Memoriał Dąbrowszczaków przebywających w Paryżu do Prezydenta RP," 2 March 1939, in Bron, *Polacy*, 218.

populist *Piast*, *Zielony Sztandar* (Green Banner), *Wici* (Beacon Fires), and *Gazeta Grudziądzka* (Grudziądz Gazette) spoke up in defense of the Catholic religion and warned against the Soviet and Communist danger. However, at least one Christian democratic paper in Silesia showed understanding towards the reasons behind the Polish government's arms sales to Republican Spain.[85] The attitude of the Center-Right Polish parties towards the Nationalist coalition in Spain requires further research.

The predicament of the Piłsudskite camp was even more complicated. The *Sanacja* was in fact an eclectic coalition glued together by its admiration for one man: Marshal Józef Piłsudski. His followers spanned the spectrum from right to left. At the time of the Civil War in Spain, since the death of the Marshal in 1935, the authoritarian regime of the Colonels (*rządy pułkowników*) held sway. The Colonels attempted to steal the thunder from their archrivals, the National Democrats, by pursuing a strongly nationalist domestic and foreign policy. Traditionally anti-Russian, they were also very anti-Communist. This of course affected their approach to Spain.

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[85] *Polonia*, 24 April 1937.

The main paper of the Polish army, the *Polska Zbrojna* (Armed Poland), expressed its sympathy for the Spanish Nationalist coalition on numerous occasions. For instance, in October 1936 the paper condemned the revolutionary excesses in the Spanish fleet. Later, its correspondent faithfully reported the Nationalist version of the destruction of Guernica, a contention routinely invoked by others.[86] The official government *Gazeta Polska* (Polish Gazette) often praised General Franco and his military supporters as true Spaniards. For example, in March 1938, the paper defended General Franco against the accusations of treason levied by Poland's Left.[87] Its editor-in-chief, Bogusław Miedziński, in a parallel to Piłsudski's *coup d'état* of 1926, lauded Franco's insurrection and expressed the conviction that the General would lead the Spanish nation to independence and freedom. Miedziński's opinion mattered very much because he was the leading ideologue of the *Sanacja*.[88] Other followers of the Marshal offered a more subtle view of the Spanish Right. For example,

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[86] *Polska Zbrojna*, 21 October 1936; Giertych, *Hiszpania*, 167.

[87] *Gazeta Polska*, 1 March 1938.

[88] Ćwik, "Społeczeństwo," in Bron, *Polacy*, 59.

in August 1937, the *Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny* (Illustrated Daily Courier) of Cracow published a nuanced article on secret societies (*juntas*) in the Spanish army prior to the uprising. Its author, an erstwhile avant-garde poet, Tadeusz Peiper, who had sojourned in Spain for several years during the First World War, alluded to liberal sympathies of at least some of the officers, stressed that perhaps certain of them now fought on Franco's side, and expressed his hopes that their influence might lead to a pact with England. The opinions expressed here most likely reflected the hopes of liberal Piłsudskites.[89]

Other official, semi-official, and pro-government periodicals also applauded Franco and the Nationalist military. Describing the early stages of the rising, the war correspondent Roman Fajans praised "all organizations taking part in the patriotic movement."[90] The Polish correspondent complemented Franco and his armed forces, quoting with approval General Miguel Cabanellas's assertion that "the new state will be based upon the foundations of exemplary justice, unshakable social

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[89] *I.K.C.: Dodatek literacko-naukowy,* 16 August 1937.

[90] Roman Fajans, *Hiszpania 1936: Z wrażeń korespondenta wojennego* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo "Rój," 1937), 24 [afterwards *Hiszpania*].

discipline, Christian social legislation, and as far as the leadership is concerned, on the high authority of its leaders. New life in Spain will undoubtedly be shaped by the reinvigorating dictatorship [*uzdrowieńcza dyktatura*], based upon the patriotic army and supported with full applause by a liberated Spain."[91] However, Fajans expressed his concern about the political components of the Nationalist coalition. True to his non-party, Piłsudskite, attitude, he was especially critical of the tensions between the Carlists and the Falangists:

> Even a superficial analysis of this program leads to a conclusion that the aims and principles of the National-Syndicalist Movement... differ completely from the ideology of the Requeté [i.e. Carlists], or, even more precisely, they constitute its contradiction. Sometime later, after the war is eventually won, serious friction can develop because of this [contradiction] between these two most powerful organizations of the current nationalist movement. After all, as much as the Requeté is conservative, Catholic, and traditionalist, the Falange is ultraradical and very progressive socially. Religious questions, which play a great role in the program of the Requeté, are hardly touched upon even as an afterthought [by the Falange]... [Finally,] the Falange does not even want to hear about [the restoration of] the monarchy.[92]

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[91] Ibid., 132.

[92] Ibid., 144.

Often, support for the Spanish Right expressed itself through attacks on the international Left. For instance, in 1937, Adam Sikorski, a correspondent of the official news service, the *Polska Agencja Telegraficzna* (Polish Telegraphic Agency), exposed Communist recruitment methods for the International Brigades. In his *Łuna nad Hiszpanią* (A Glow over Spain), Sikorski explained that

> The [economic] crisis in France affected Polish workers predominantly. Ejected ruthlessly not only from shops, mines, and factories, but also from France, they became homeless. Isn't a beggar, who sees no future for himself [and] who is neither legally nor financially protected by the country to which he emigrated, the most susceptible element for Communist propaganda? Death to the bourgeoisie, death to the fascists – these are the slogans which find the easiest access to the brain of the beggar who chronically goes hungry...
>
> [The Communists enticed him:] 'Come with us to defend the oppressed people. You will receive a lot of money, good food; you will have new shoes and beautiful clothes. Spain will not forget about you. [After the victory] they will give you a good job [and] a prosperous future.'[93]

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[93] Adam Sikorski, *Łuna nad Hiszpanią* (Warszawa, 1937), quoted in Piotr Lipiński, "Dynamit i cześć," *Gazeta Wyborcza* [Warszawa], 4-5 January 1997, 15.

Sikorski, Fajans, and other foreign correspondents of the government media often described massacres, desecrations, and destruction wrought on Spain by the revolutionaries. Such negative press, attacking the Left in general and the Soviet Union in particular, was most likely more frequent than thoughtful analysis of the Spanish Right. The accounts of atrocities stirred the popular imagination better than ideological debates. Nonetheless, according to the historian Marek Zagórniak, the official editorials in the government press "were characterized by more restraint and caution."[94] Moreover, at least some commentators on the state-owned Polish Radio allegedly distinguished themselves by an outright anti-Franco bias.[95]

The Left in Poland and the Spanish Right

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[94] Marek Zagórniak, "Wojna domowa w Hiszpanii w oświetleniu polskiego rządowego piśmiennictwa politycznego i wojskowego, 1936-1939," *Studia Historyczne* [Kraków] no. 3, vol. 26 (1983): 443-444 [afterwards "Wojna"].

[95] *Gazeta Kościelna* (1937): 181 in Modras, *The Catholic Church*, 170.

Hitherto most discussions of the attitude of the Left in Poland towards the Civil War in Spain have been seen through a Communist lens. According to this view, Moscow guided the Communist Party of Poland (KPP), which, in turn, led the masses at home.[96] It has also been argued that the non-Communist Left followed the lead of its Communist comrades but its leaders often failed to do so resolutely enough.[97] This simplistic analysis should be abandoned forthwith. As Jan B. de Weydenthal has amply demonstrated, no one but the KPP marched to Stalin's drum. It is true that the Communists attempted to manipulate the

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[96] The main leftist forces opposing the Spanish Nationalists were: the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), the Peasant Party (SL), the General Jewish Labor Bund, the zionist-socialist Poale Zion, the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party (USPD), the German Social Democratic Party (DSAP), trade unions, including the government-run Union of Trade Unions (ZZZ), and the Communist Party of Poland (KPP).

[97] See Leon Ziaja, "Polski ruch robotniczy w obronie Republiki Hiszpańskiej," in *Wojna narodoworewolucyjna w Hiszpanii, 1936-1939,* edited by Wanda Włoszczak (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1979), 219-235 [afterward "Polski" in *Wojna*].

rest of the Left, but they were often unsuccessful.[98] Non-Communist Left-wingers and liberals were not only more powerful than the KPP, but they also had their own reasons to oppose the Right in Spain. First, the Spanish Nationalist coalition adhered to ideals antithetical to their own. Thus, they favored the Spanish Left which cherished values analogous to their own. Second, Poland's leftists and liberals feared that a Right-wing victory in Spain might strengthen the authoritarian government at home and fascist, nationalist, and, especially, national socialist tendencies abroad, particularly in Germany. Conversely, a Left-wing victory in Spain boded well for the leftist and liberal hopes at home and abroad. Finally, the Left in Poland opposed the military uprising by Franco also because of its

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[98] The Communist Party of Poland had been inimical to the security of the Polish state; indeed for over a decade it had advocated its partition between the Soviet Union and the future Soviet Germany. Moreover, the KPP had actively opposed a united front with other leftist parties. However, by July 1936, the KPP had executed a turn as dictated by Moscow and began suddenly voicing its concerns about the German threat and working to form a united front with the rest of Poland's Left. Spain served as the pivot of this strategy. See Jan B. de Weydenthal, *The Communists of Poland: An Historical Outline* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), 15-33. A Communist historian rather disingeniously explained that "the KPP tied the question of the defense of the independence of Poland with the defense of the Republican Spain. It stressed that question especially after the German troops had joined the struggle. The Communists maintained that a German success in Spain would threaten Poland's independence. Therefore they also took part in the defense of the Spanish Republic, despite the fact that they had fought against the slogan 'for our freedom and yours' not so long ago." See Henryk Cimek, *Komuniści, Polska, Stalin, 1918-1939* (Białystok: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1990), 105 [afterward *Komuniści*].

similarity to Piłsudski's *coup d'état*. However, whereas most of the Left correctly saw the Nationalist rising as a threat to the social revolution in Spain, the liberals were mostly appalled by the demise of parliamentary democracy in Madrid.

Various purveyors of Left-wing opinion differed in their hopes for Spain's future. Most, however, for propaganda purposes, cast the Spanish war as the struggle between "democracy" and "fascism." Moreover, the leftists routinely made references to Polish history, equating the Spanish Rightists with Polish opponents of the anti-Russian January Insurrection of 1863 and, especially, with the *Targowica*, a treasonous minority clique of Polish aristocrats who assisted Russia in Poland's partitions. Thus, like on the Right, passionate slogans substituted for a balanced inquiry among the Left.

The Communists of course were the least equivocal. Already in June 1936 the KPP stated that "the cause of Spain is the cause of Poland."[99] The

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[99] Lech Wyszczelski, "Rola KPP i komunistów w kształtowaniu oblicza ideowego Polaków walczących w obronie Republiki Hiszpańskiej," in Włoszczak, *Wojna*, 238 [afterward "Rola" in *Wojna*].

meaning of this statement was explained in the resolution of the Polish Communist Party in February 1937:

> In this concrete situation the unity of socialists, communists, and populists is an iron necessity. The plenum [of the KPP] has expressed its deep conviction that cooperation between them will be maintained despite the sophism of their rightist leaders, who oppose a united front with [the slogan of] the alleged unity of the working class 'only under its own banner.'
>
> By rejecting all cooperation with the communists, the rightist leaders of the PPS [Polish Socialist Party] and [the Jewish] Bund collaborate most closely with the Trotskyite agents of fascism, warmongers, [and] rabid enemies of the Soviet Union, and they should be expelled from their ranks by any respectable proletarian organization...
>
> *Already today there is the possibility of achieving unity of action, without which the laboring masses will not be able to prevail*. This unity has been realized in the popular front by the working masses of France and Spain, heroically repelling the assaults of fascism.
>
> Faced by this bloody struggle, which has been undertaken by the Spanish Republic against the fascist onslaught, the [KPP] Plenum addresses once more the leadership of the socialist parties, trade unions, and the Populist Party with a proposal to organize immediately a joint action to aid the Spanish people...
>
> The Plenum calls upon all worker and peasant organizations, the democratic intelligentsia, and all peace-loving citizens to fulfill their sacred duty towards the Spanish people...

> Let us remember that, as comrade [Georgii] Dimitrov has correctly confirmed, the future of every country 'in many aspects depends on the result of the struggle of the Spanish people against their fascist oppressors.'
>
> The victory of the Spanish nation over its own and alien fascist invaders will stop the march of reactionaries throughout Europe, deal a painful blow to the warmongers, and increase the chance to preserve peace. However, the victory of fascism would elevate a wave of barbarism, enslaving the entire world, and it would ignite the fire of war, killing the independence of many nations, including Poland.
>
> That is why 'the liberation of Spain from the oppression by fascist reactionaries is not solely the business of Spain but is the common cause of all of progressive humanity' ([according to] Stalin).
>
> That is why the struggle for Spain is the struggle for Poland [emphasis in the original].[100]

Accordingly, the Central Committee of the KPP issued a proclamation calling its followers to

> Assist Republican Spain which is fighting for freedom, independence, and peace against the united forces of international fascism!... Down with the agents of Hitler in Poland: the Sanacja and Endecja! Long live the Popular Front in Poland...

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[100] "1937 luty, Moskwa. - Uchwała V Plenum KC KPP pt. O jedność klasy robotniczej, o wspólną walkę robotników, chłopów i wszystkich ludzi pracy, o demokratyczny front ludowy," Appendix 3 in Cimek, *Komuniści*, 160-161.

> The leaders of the Sanacja, just like the Endeks who are inspired by Hitler, are enemies of the democratic tradition of our nation... The ruling Sanacja clique has stood on the side of Hitler-Franco. The ruling Sanacja clique defends the Spanish trenches of Hitler because in the fascist German fist it sees an armored fist aimed at the liberty of the Polish people.[101]

The theme of this internationalist battle between "democracy" against "fascism", the subject of the German threat, and the *motif* of the struggle against Polish "fascism," appeared numerous times in the Communist propaganda. In June 1937, a Communist newspaper called on its followers "to unite the ranks of the working class of Poland in solidarity to aid Spain... Polish fascism, which consciously supports the worst enemies of the Polish nation, will balk only before a united front of the entire working-class of Poland."[102] In June 1938 in the KPP proclamation "To the working people – believing Catholics," the Comintern agit-propaganda machine warned:

> The threat of an invasion hangs above Poland and can materialize any day. Germany and Italy are doing their bloody

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[101] "Odezwa KC KPP z lutego 1937," in Bron, *Polacy*, 193.

[102] *Czerwony Sztandar*, 25 June 1937.

> work in Spain. Hitler is preparing for Poland the same lot as for Spain. A murderous fire of fratricidal war rages in Spain. Tomorrow Polish towns and villages may burn.[103]

Thus, the Spanish Right was depicted as "fascist", "reactionary", "traitorous", and "counterrevolutionary". The Comintern propaganda machine used the scare tactics of anti-fascism, while failing to describe honestly the totalitarian Stalinist alternative it embraced. In September 1936, the Communist *Czerwony Sztandar* (Red Banner) wrote about "the People's Spain in the struggle against the Counterrevolution."[104] Similar rhetoric was also reflected in poetry. In 1938, allegedly to commemorate the patriots of the anti-Russian January Rising and to denounce its traitors, the Communist Edward Szymański scolded Franco and his Polish defenders in the bitterly sarcastic "Paean to General Franco":[105]

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[103] "Do ludu pracy -- wierzących katolików," June 1938, quoted in Ćwiek, "Społeczeństwo," in Bron, *Polacy*, 50.

[104] *Czerwony Sztandar*, 8 September 1936.

[105] Edward Szymański, "Pean ku czci gen. Franco napisany w 70 [sic!] rocznicę Powstania Styczniowego," Matuszewski and Pollak, *Poezja*, 2: 205-207. The poem was allegedly written on the 70th anniversary of the January Rising of 1863. However, it was most likely written five years later (1938). After all, Franco was hardly a well-known figure (at least in Poland) in 1933.

Za drachm trzydzieści
mógł Judasz służyć,
byli i tańsi: za krajcar.
A pośród zdrajców
małych i dużych
pan jest naczelny zdrajca.

Nocą styczniową pisząc ten hymn
po polsku w wolnej Warszawie,
nie panu pluję w pysk, ale tym,
co pańskiej merdają sławie.

For thirty drachmas
Judas could serve;
cheaper ones served for a dollar.
And among the traitors,
small and great,
you, Sir, are the chief traitor.

Writing this poem in Polish
on a January night in free Warsaw,
It is not your face, Sir, I am spitting on
but on those wagging their tails for your glory.

Earlier, Władysław Broniewski, arguably the most prominent Communist poet, wrote his "Glory and Dynamite" about the defense of Madrid:

Idą faszyści. Wiodą natarcie
marokańskimi batalionami.
Madryt czerwony walczy zażarcie.
Pięść podniesiona. Cześć i dynamit.

The fascists are coming. They are leading the attack
with the Moroccan batallions.
Red Madrid is fighting fiercely.
The uplifted fist. Glory and dynamite.

When defeat was near, Broniewski also penned "They shall not pass".[106]

Umierający republikanie,
brocząc po bruku krwią swoich ran,
w krwi umaczanym palcem, po ścianie
wypisywali: "No pasarán!"
Ogniem, żelazem napis ten ryto
pośród barykad z bruku i serc.
Tak się rodziła wolność Madrytu,
droższa niż życie, trwalsza niż śmierć.

Na nią dwa lata parły faszyzmy,
ogniem, żelazem, żłobiąc jej kształt.
Wolność na posąg rosła ojczyzny,
tej, która depcze ucisk i gwałt.

W wierszu mym – wolność, równość, braterstwo,

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[106] Władysław Broniewski, "No pasarán!" in Matuszewski and Pollak, *Poezja*, 1: 440-441.

wiersz mój zbroczony krwią swoich ran.
Jeśli ma zginąć, niech poprze śmierć swą
głosi nadzieję: "No pasarán!"

Dying Republicans,
the blood of their wounds dripping on the pavement,
wrote on the wall
with fingers dipped in blood: "No pasarán!"

This slogan was carved with fire and iron,
among barricades of cobblestones and hearts.
That is how Madrid's freedom was born
more expensive than life, more durable than death.

For two years fascism has stormed against it,
with fire and iron carving its shape.
Freedom grew into a monument to the fatherland,
that tramples upon oppression and violence.

In my poem – freedom, equality, brotherhood,
my poem is stained with the blood of its wounds.
If it's to perish, through its death let it herald
the hope: "No pasarán!"

Broniewski intended his poems not only for his own comrades, but also for a much broader audience. He was the technical editor of the influential progressive-liberal weekly *Czarno na białem* (Black on White) which first published "No Pasarán!". In fact, the Communist Party of Poland worked hand in glove with the Comintern to harness the animosity

of rank-and-file non-Communist leftists and liberals towards the Spanish Right for Stalin's own ends. Simply, the Communists intended to steal followers from Poland's mainstream Left-wing parties and liberal groups. Using their usual tactics of deception and subterfuge, they infiltrated various established progressive organizations and set up Communist front groups. They also worked closely with other leftists. However, it is important to stress that the parties of the non-Communist Left generally tried to avoid collaborating with the KPP. According to the Communist historian Lech Wyszczelski, for instance, in the spring of 1937 the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) and the Jewish Bund refused to hold a "Spanish Week" together with the KPP. Allegedly, however, the socialists agreed to march together with the Communists in solidarity with the Spanish Left on May 1, 1937. Since, as a rule, parties in Poland marched in blocks, it simply meant that the Communists merely followed the socialists on the same route. Hence, the vaunted cooperation did not amount to much.[107] Moreover, immediatelly after his visit to Spain in April 1937, where he wished the International Brigades and "the Spanish [Red] army the

[107] See Wyszczelski, "Rola," in Włoszczak, *Wojna*, 247.

swiftest achievement of victory over fascism and capitalism,"[108] the senior leader of the Jewish Bund, Wiktor Alter, unequivocally condemned policy of the Comintern in Spain, the pro-Stalinist role of the International Brigades, and the pro-Moscow line of the Spanish Republican government.[109]

Nonetheless, Polish (and Jewish) socialist propaganda resembled its Communist counterpart. The main socialist paper *Robotnik* (Worker) invariably referred to the Spanish Right as "fascist" and vehemently criticized its alliance with German and Italian "fascisms." At least some socialists opposed neutrality and called for international armed intervention in Spain as an antidote to "blackmail by fascism." The eminent socialist leader Mieczysław Niedziałkowski venomously sneered at Franco as "an upright patriot" who was in fact a puppet of Hitler and Mussolini. Niedziałkowski was sure that after capturing Spain, Germany

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[108] "Oświadczenie przywódców Klasowych Związków Zawodowych w Polsce złożone w czasie ich wizyty w batalionie im. Jarosława Dąbrowskiego w dniu 19 kwietnia 1937," in Lech Wyszczelski, *Dąbrowszczacy* (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1986), 152 [afterwards "Oświadczenie" in *Dąbrowszczacy*].

[109] Wyszczelski, *Dąbrowszczacy*, 31.

would turn against Poland.[110] His party comrade, Kazimierz Czapiński, warned that "the victory of General Franco is a threat to Poland" because it would undermine the European peace.[111] However, the most virulent denunciations of the Spanish Right as traitors, with parallels to Poland's treasonous aristocrats of the 18th century, were serialized by *Robotnik* in April 1938. Their author, Mieczysław Bibrowski, was a secret Communist agent of influence.[112] His arguments were highly regarded by at least some socialists. According to a PPS proclamation issued in Łódź probably in the Spring of 1937,

> What we are witnessing before our very eyes in Spain is a mobilization of *the Spanish reaction and Spanish fascism* and a rebellion against a legitimate and legal government. This is the most cynical high treason, dressing up as patriotism. The Spanish government is a government that was formed after the most legal of elections... The persistence of the war can only be explained by the assistance that the *fascists and traitors* of their country have been receiving from Italy and Germany [emphasis added].[113]

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[110] *Robotnik*, 20 August, 2 and 14 September, 6 and 17 December 1936.

[111] *Robotnik*, 22 May 1937.

[112] Mieczysław Bibrowski, "Kampania prasy polskiej na rzecz republikańskiej Hiszpanii w latach 1936-1938," in Bron, *Polacy*, 174 [afterwards "Kampania"].

[113] Quoted in Ziaja, "Polski," in Włoszczak, *Wojna*, 220.

Another local socialist proclamation asserted that "the *traitors* of the Spanish nation... are in cahoots with German Hitlerism and Italian Fascism, [and] are selling their own country only to receive assistance in the struggle with the working class and the Spanish people, who are defending a legitimate government elected by a decisive majority of the Spanish nation [emphasis added]."[114] In July 1937, calling for demonstrations during "The Week of Solidarity with Spain," the Central Committee of the Polish Socialist Party expressed its desire for "the final victory of freedom and socialism over fascism."[115] Likewise, the leftist leadership of the government-backed Union of Trade Unions (ZZZ) regarded the Spanish Right and its struggle in a very negative light. According to an important newspaper of the ZZZ, the *Front Robotniczy* (Workers' Front), "he who wishes for Spanish fascism to win borders on treason against his own country and his own state."[116] Thus spoke the

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[114] ibid., 220-221.

[115] ibid., 231.

[116] *Front Robotniczy*, 27 September 1937.

Left-wing Piłsudskites. However, most Polish socialists were strongly hostile to Communism and the Soviet Union. Moreover, even their anti-clericalism usually shied away from attacking Catholic Christianity itself. The same was even more true about Polish populists.

The leadership of the center-left Peasant Party (SL) proclaimed neutrality in the conflict. However, the left-wing populist radicals tried to exploit the struggle against foreign "fascism" for domestic gain. Nonetheless, their attempted subversion in the party ranks fizzled because an overwhelming majority of the SL rank-and-file were very religious Catholics. These center-left peasant activists were assisted by right-wing rural counterparts who supported the Spanish Right. A Comintern diversion in the populist ranks was preempted when the SL expelled from its ranks a secret Communist, Julian Wieczorek, who had infiltrated the leadership of the peasant youth organization "Beacon Fire." Outmaneuvered, a minority of the young rural radicals limited their outbursts against the Spanish Right to occasional propaganda during peasant strikes and demonstrations in 1937. These were echoed at least in two left-populist papers, the *Młoda Myśl Ludowa* (Young Populist

Thought) and the *Chłopskie Życie Gospodarcze* (Peasant Economic Life).[117] However, the anti-Spanish Nationalist *ouevre* found its most elegant expression among Poland's liberals, both among its Catholic majority and its atheist minority.

Borejsza: The Master Manipulator

Unlike many leading socialists and populists of Poland, at least some prominent liberals proved to be easier prey for Communist propagandists and provocateurs. In fact, the Comintern set up in Poland a structure

[117] See Ćwiek, "Społeczeństwo," in Bron, *Polacy*, 53-54, 56. And see also a recollection by Leon Lutyk, "Ludowcy a wojna hiszpańska," in Bron, *Polacy*, 167-171.

analogous to its Western European organization.[118] Willi Münzenberg and his apparatus in Paris controlled operations in Warsaw, which were almost certainly run by the crypto-Communist Beniamin Goldberg, aka Jerzy Borejsza. This propaganda master assembled an impressive array of agents of influence and fellow travellers.[119] One of them, who served as

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[118] According to the British historian Norman Davies, "One of the more insidious forms of propaganda, however, is that where the true sources of information are hidden from recipients and propagators alike. This genre of so-called 'covertly directed propaganda' aims to mobilize a network of unsuspecting 'agents of influence' who pass on the desired message as if they were acting spontaneously. By feigning a coincidence of views with those of the target society, which it seeks to subvert, and by pandering to the proclivities of key individuals, it can suborn a dominant élite of opinion-makers by stealth.

Such, it seems, was the chosen method of Stalin's propaganda chiefs who spun their webs among the cultural circles of leading Western countries from the 1920s onwards. The chief controller in the filed was an apparently harmless German Communist..., Willi Munzenberg [sic Münzenberg] (1889-1940). Working alongside Soviet spies, he perfected the art of doing secret business in the open. He set the agenda of a series of campaigns against 'Anti-militarism', 'Anti-imperialism', and above all 'Anti-fascism', homing in on a handful of receptive milieux in Berlin, Paris, and London. His principal dupes and recruits, dubbed 'fellow-travellers' by the sceptics, rarely joined the Communist Party and would indignantly deny being manipulated. They included writers, artists, editors, left-wing publishers, and carefully selected celebrities -- hence Romain Rolland, Louis Aragon, Andrè Malraux, Heinrich Mann, Berthold Brecht, Anthony Blunt, Harold Laski, Claud Cockburn, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, and half the Bloomsbury Set. Since all attracted strings of acolytes, dubbed 'Innocents' Clubs', they achieved a ripple effect that was aptly called 'rabbit breeding'. The ultimate goal has been nicely defined; 'to create for the right-thinking, non-communist West the dominating political prejudice of the era: the belief that any opinion that happened to serve... the Soviet Union was derived from the most essential elements of human decency.'" See Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 501.

[119] See Barbara Fijałkowska, *Borejsza i Różański: Przyczynek do dziejów stalinizmu w Polsce* (Olsztyn: Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna, 1995) [afterward *Borejsza*]; Stephen Koch, *Double Lives: Spies and Writers in the Secret Soviet War of Ideas Against the West* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 265-297.

the editor-in-chief of the progressive *Czarno na białem* (Black on White), January Grzędziński, unabashedly admitted that "I travelled from time to time from Warsaw to Paris to establish and maintain contacts, most of all, with the Spanish [Republican] center 'España'." He acknowledged also that "the articles [on Spain] by Jerzy Borejsza prominently figured" in his weekly and that "Borejsza...became a zealous collaborator of our periodical."[120]

In 1937, this Communist penned a work on modern Spanish history that for progressives and liberals became a standard frame of reference on Spain.[121] His *Spain (1873-1936)* was written with considerably more sophistication than the usually crude, run-of-the mill party propaganda. However, under the veneer of finesse, Borejsza's arguments are unmistakably the Comintern's. Interspersing his work with references to the wisdom of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Borejsza argued that Spain internally was an arena of class struggle. Externally, the country

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[120] January Grzędziński, "O tygodniku 'Czarno na Białem,'" in Bron, *Polacy*, 178-179.

[121] Jerzy Boreisza, *Hiszpania (1873-1936)* (Warszawa: Nowa Biblioteka Społeczna, 1937) [afterward *Hiszpania*]. At that time the author spelled his name as Boreisza; later, he altered it to the more familiar Borejsza. After the Second World War the Communist made Borejsza the enforcerer of Stalinist “culture” in Poland.

became a pawn in the clash between peace-lovers and warmongers. The former were represented by the Soviet Union and France, the latter by Germany, Italy, and imperialist England.[122]

Borejsza concentrated on the time immediately preceding the Civil War. His periodization was simple. The Second Spanish Republic was restored in 1931, but was destroyed within two years. Thus, the period between 1933 and 1935 saw "the rule of reaction."[123] Finally, "the rule of the popular front survived the civil war after July 1936. This is a period of deep social reforms and the sharpening of the struggle for the future of Spain. The Spanish Republic has entered the road of social and political reconstruction."[124]

According to Borejsza, the camp of progress and democracy first consisted of "the *proletariat*, torn asunder between the party of the extreme reformist socialists... and the anarchist organizations..., as well as

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[122] For a short overview of the Comintern policy see Anthony D'Agostino, *Soviet Succession Struggles: Kremlinology and the Russian Question from Lenin to Gorbachev* (Boston and London: Allen & Unwin, 1988), 130-158.

[123] Boreisza, *Hiszpania*, 253.

[124] Ibid., 210.

peasants... and the petty bourgeoisie [emphasis in the original]."[125] These forces had opposed the monarchy. However, in their struggle against the capitalist-republican exploitation after 1931 they were also joined by the Communists. Borejsza shied away from elaborating on the Communist involvement in Spain. He stressed that "it does not mean however that we would like to belittle the influence and role of this party. It began to play a significant role in the context of political forces in the country [Spain] in 1934. On the other hand, while appreciating the role of the Communists, one should not ascribe to them a demonic power, thus abandoning objective circumstances."[126]

Borejsza was much more forthcoming in depicting the Spanish Right. It consisted of "the Carlists together with the clergy, large landowners, bourgeoisie, and the army."[127] The Catholic Church monopolized education and was the main pillar of feudal oppression. The clergy was wealthy and mostly morally corrupt. A few socially conscious

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[125] Ibid., 85.

[126] Ibid., 252-253.

[127] Ibid., 84.

clergymen, however, shifted their support from Carlism to social radicalism.[128] After the overthrow of the First Spanish Republic, the Carlists compromised with mainstream monarchists, the "Alphonsines." Through court intrigues, the Carlists were able to check the spread of liberalism. Borejsza believed that

> facing the threat of revolution, [the Carlists] understood that their continued persistence in the state of war against capitalism leads only to the weakening of the common forces [of the Right]. Therefore they shifted to a stance of peaceful opposition to 'Alphonsism', watching closely lest it become excessive liberalism. They wielded influence at the royal court; they had a number of confidants there. In certain times, when they [the Carlists] judged that their influence was waning, they would undertake opposition. They left a way out for themselves: the permanent pretender to the throne, who resided abroad, and the militias, which were organized in secret.[129]

In the period of the Second Republic, after 1931, Borejsza lumped the Carlists with other monarchists. He dubbed them "Rightist parties of the *old* type [emphasis in the original]." Among them, the most prominent

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[128] Ibid., 185-192.

[129] Ibid., 83.

were "the so-called 'traditionalists'" and the *Renovación Española*, which "aims at restoring the Habsburgs." Borejsza explains that "these parties were led by Antonio Goicoechea and [José] Calvo Sotelo, who represented the monarch and his faithful landed nobles and clergymen. They opposed any compromise with the Republic and they advocated a ruthless struggle for the return of monarchy."[130] Finally, the monarchists maintained contacts with the Italian Fascists.

Following the monarchists, according to Borejsza, the second most important part of the Spanish Right were the "large noble landowners." He noted that "these feudalists have guaranteed for themselves a hegemony within the monarchy."[131] After 1931, they compromised with the great capitalists to create "a capitalist-feudal" system of the Second Republic.[132] Thus, the landed nobles unofficially remained in power, albeit in a subordinate position to the "bourgeoisie." Moreover, before 1936, because

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[130] Ibid., 239.

[131] Ibid., 83.

[132] Ibid., 197.

of the collapse of the wine market in France, the landed nobility shifted its subservience from French capitalists to German Nazis.[133]

The third element of the Spanish Right consisted of the middle class, "or more precisely, the great bourgeoisie." Borejsza argued that it "abandoned the republican way, which [abandonment] carried with itself the dangers of civil war against the proletariat, separatist movements, and the peasantry."[134] Only nominally centrist, the liberal Alejandro Lerroux, "representing the interest of the Spanish great capitalists, who were tied to France, has been in alliance with the circles of the landed nobility from the first moment of the creation of the Republic."[135] However, prior to 1936, fearing a leftist revolution, Lerroux and his liberal-radical circles became subservient to Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.[136]

Among the new players on the Spanish Right, after 1931, there was a "fascist party," the Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rightist Organizations (*Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas* --

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[133] Ibid., 32.

[134] Ibid., 84.

[135] Ibid., 244.

[136] Ibid., 32.

CEDA). This was a Catholic "block of several organizations active in various areas, among workers, peasants, young people, and bourgeoisie... In this manner CEDA was in fact a camp without a clearly elucidated ideology and slogans which kept changing according to the paradigm of the great American parties."[137] Borejsza boiled down the program of the CEDA to four points:

> A) The Church. Return to the status quo as during the monarchy. B) Opposition to all attempts to carry out the land reform, while maintaining the charade of the internal distribution of the state lands. C) The abolition of workingmen's unions and revision of the social legislation. D) A slow grab for power and the destruction of other parties until such time when the CEDA becomes the only party.[138]

Borejsza faulted its leader, José María Gil Robles, for the failure of the CEDA to realize its potential. "As we see Gil Robles is endowed with a number of intellectual attributes of a fascist leader... [However,] he has been unable even to unite the entire camp of the bourgeoisie and large

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[137] Ibid., 241.

[138] Ibid., 243.

landlords because he represented only one foreign group: the capitalists who are tied with England."[139] Gil Robles was not even his own man. Borejsza hinted that the Christian democratic politician was controlled by Jews and Nazis: "the right hand man of the Jewish speculator, Juan Marcho, Gil Robles maintains contacts with the racist headquarters [in Berlin], certainly with the knowledge of his master [*mocodawca*]."[140] His vacillation between Berlin and London was the main reason why the "fascist groups" in Spain failed to unite "into one camp."[141]

Strangely, the Communist Borejsza almost completely ignores the Falange. His only remark about the group was very cursory: "The Falange led by [José] Antonio Primo de Rivera was a fascist party competing [with the CEDA]. The Falange advanced a program of 23 points which was borrowed entirely from the Italian paradigm."[142]

The final component of the Spanish Right was the army. Technically, it was not a party but rather an entity on the "fringe and beyond" of the

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[139] Ibid., 243.

[140] Ibid., 32.

[141] Ibid., 32.

[142] Ibid., 243-244.

reactionary political bloc. The army was run by secret military syndicates, which fought for higher pay and power. The Spanish military was nothing more than a police force. According to Borejsza,

> the professional cadres of the [commissioned] officers were recruited from among the feudal and landed nobility; the monarchy secured for them the primacy in the state apparatus. It [i.e. the cadre] abandoned the pronunciamiento; military juntas converted themselves into cliques of military circles. After the loss of [Spain's] colonies the army abandoned making war, limiting itself to the role of the gendarmerie... [After 1931] these generals, specialists in civil wars,... were like the condotieri, ready to serve anyone who pays more. The central staff of the future rising grew out of this environment.[143]

Of course, the Spanish army maintained contacts with the Nazis in Germany and the Fascists in Italy.

According to Borejsza, these domestic enemies of Spanish democracy had to contend with a brewing revolution.

> The development of [political] forces within the Republic, the dissatisfaction of the peasant masses, and the intensification of the struggle in the cities exacerbated the conditions within the Republican bloc. While the proletarian and social-radical

[143] Ibid., 84, 244.

> parties were building up their forces within the nation, the reactionaries were looking for support abroad. They found it [mainly] in Hitlerite Germany.

In addition, the Spanish Right drew its assistance from Italy and England. Why were foreign powers interested in Spain? Germany and Italy fought for "a new division of raw materials and colonies."[144] However, Great Britain supported the Spanish Right because

> democracy in Spain means land reform, liquidation of illiteracy, [and the end of] economic dependence on England; it is a threat to Gibraltar [and] to the protectorate of Portugal; it tips the balance of influence between France and England in Northern Africa in favor of France. *Democratic Spain means an independent Spain* [emphasis in the original].[145]

However, "Franco is too closely tied to Italy and Germany for England to support his action too decisively."[146] Therefore, England opted for a policy of non-intervention, which served its imperial designs. "England destroyed the power of Spain. England has imposed the policy

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[144] Ibid., 32.

[145] Ibid., 31.

[146] Ibid., 35.

of 'non-intervention' towards this country in the period of its struggle against the invader."[147] Borejsza concluded that

> the victory of fascism in Spain would undoubtedly destroy the policy of peace that France and her allies have been conducting for a long time...
>
> Struggling for democracy and independence, Spain is fighting for its right to return to the arena of history as a sovereign and independent state. The Spanish Republic has entered the road of social and political reconstruction.[148]

Inspired by the Comintern, Borejsza's work was extremely important in the liberal discourse in Poland. Of course, its sophistication was often lost in the propaganda barrage unleashed against the Spanish Right by a powerful nucleus of agents of influence and their relatively large flock of fellow-travellers, who maintained a formidable grip on the imagination of Poland's liberal intelligentsia.

The Comintern and Poland's liberals

[147] Ibid., 272.

[148] Ibid., 44.

Liberal attitudes towards the Civil War in Spain were as unequivocal in their condemnations of the Spanish Right as they were ambiguous about the revolutionary violence of the domestic and international Left. Moreover, at least some of Poland's liberals flirted with the Soviet system, believing it to be the harbinger of social progress. Pacifistic, they recoiled from violence, militarism, and the virulence of the Nationalists. Moreover, the liberals were offended by popular Christian fideism and stern Catholic traditionalism. They also recoiled from anti-Semitism, not least because some of the most prominent Polish liberals were of Jewish origin.

An erstwhile Communist commissar in the International Brigades, Tadeusz Ćwik, stressed that

> The cause of the Spanish Republic touched deeply the circles of the artistic and working Polish intelligentsia. Wacław Barcikowski and many leading intellectuals became actively engaged in various activities on the behalf of fighting Spain...
>
> The progressive press preached the truth about Spain, objectively analyzed the situation, exposed the invaders, described the terrible results of the bombing of Madrid by the fascists, and popularized the appeals calling for assistance for the struggling Spanish people.[149]

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[149] Ćwik, "Społeczeństwo," in Bron, *Polacy*, 55-56.

Mieczysław Bibrowski, a Communist agent of influence, acknowledged that

> I was one of those who actively participated in the press campaign on behalf of Republican Spain. Between February and July 1936, I published a periodical that was the organ of the Popular Front of the intelligentsia. The weekly was called *Oblicze dnia* [Face of the Day] and for a short period it attracted the flower of our artistic intelligentsia with such leaders as [the Communist poet] Adam Strug, [the progressive poet] Zofia Nałkowska, and [the liberal novelist] Maria Dąbrowska. It was inspired by the victorious Popular Front in France and Spain. Among our collaborators there were such people as Romain Rolland, Louis Aragon, and Paul Langevin...
>
> *Oblicze dnia* remained in contact with the KPP, and more precisely with the [front periodical] *Czerwona Pomoc* [Red Aid], which was its legal organ.[150]

However, probably most of these non-Communist liberals were not secret Soviet agents. Maybe there was simply a tendency among them to exaggerate the level of their past awareness about the involvement of the Comintern in this disinformation campaign about the Spanish Right. After all, many of these intellectuals wrote their memoirs in the 1960s to ingratiate themselves with the Communist rulers of Poland.

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[150] Bibrowski, "Kampania," in Bron, *Polacy*, 172-173.

The importance of secret members of the Communist party, who operated in the liberal ranks, should not be underestimated while assessing the reaction of the Polish Left to the Civil War in Spain. At the beginning of the conflict, the agent of influence Władysław Spasowski announced in the *Dziennik Popularny* (Popular Daily) that "Fascism in Spain has been kindling a world-wide conflagration."[151] A leading Communist propaganda expert, Julian Brun, explained that the war in Spain was fought "to save humanity from the terrible catastrophe of fascism triumphant."[152] Their liberal admirers needed very little convincing. On August 30, 1936, Joanna Gintułt, a correspondent of the influential *Wiadomości Literackie* (Literary News), warned her readers that "in Zaragoza, Sevilla, and Oviedo army officers are mercilessly executing the workers, who are fighting for freedom and the right to live."[153] The author filed her story shortly after arriving from Poland in Barcelona and, thus, she could not have witnessed what was happening anywhere else in Spain.

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[151] Quoted in Ćwik, "Społeczeństwo," in Bron, *Polacy*, 56.

[152] *Przegląd* 1 (September 1936): 25.

[153] *Wiadomości Literackie*, 30 August 1936.

But that did not matter. For her, the struggle in Spain took place between the professional military and "the people," just like in Poland.

Other liberals and progressives followed the lead. In June 1937, the progressive scholar Stefan Zygmunt Czarnowski called the Nationalist rising "a fascist rebellion of the generals."[154] According to Modras, also in 1937 "the Jewish [liberal Zionist] *Nasz Przegląd* [Our Review] had run a story describing Franco's soldiers as 'rabid dogs'."[155] In January 1938 January Grzędziński, a fellow traveller, accused the Nationalist coalition of being pawns of foreign powers: "Let us discard misleading and false terminology, which has been established and imposed by the daily press. This terminology orders us to believe that this Spain of the Italians, Germans, Morrocans, and the Foreign Legion is patriotic, but not that Spain of the legitimate government of the peasants, factory workers, or burghers."[156] Soon after, the *Czarno na Białem* called for international intervention in Spain on behalf of "democracy."[157]

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[154] Stefan Czarnowski, "Słowo wstępne," in Borejsza, *Hiszpania*, III.

[155] Modras, *The Catholic Church*, 170.

[156] *Czarno na Białem*, 16 January 1938.

[157] *Czarno na Białem*, 28 May 1938.

Słonimski and Pruszyński: Progress and Revolution

Of course, not every liberal intellectual expressed his opposition to the Spanish Right and its foreign allies in a crude manner. Two of the most prominent liberals, Antoni Słonimski and Ksawery Pruszyński, most clearly deviated from the stereotype. The eminent poet Antoni Słonimski travelled the tortured road from left-wing Zionism to the liberalism of Polish assimilation. Not surprisingly, Słonimski tried vainly to reconcile the irreconciable: revolution with artistic neutrality. His poem, "The Conversation", describes best his solution to this inner dilemma:[158]

“Gdybym był wichrem, w gniewnym porywie
Jak cyklon spadłbym, gdzie wrogów armia,
A Twoje czoło owiewał tkliwie,
O Pasionaria!

Gdybym był burzą, krwawym pożarem,
Stałbym jak piorun, kula ognista,
Jak czarna tarcza nad Alkazarem"
– rzekł komunista.

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[158] Antoni Słonimski, "Rozmowa," in *Skamandryci*, edited by Jan Marx (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Alfa, 1993), 442-443.

"Niech się żrą gniewne psy między sobą,
Nie opłakujmy śmierci człowieka,
Płacz nad Walencją, płacz nad Kordobą,
Żałuj El Greca.

Wara, psy wściekłe, od kolumn złotych!
Nad wasze sprawy ważniejsza czysta
ta linia, którą wspina się gotyk"
– odrzekł artysta.

O mój artysto, i w ludzkim ciele
Odnajdziesz łuki i architrawy,
Skrzydła aniołów i kapitele
I ołtarz krwawy.

Spod znaku krzyża czy znaku młota
Ciało młodzieńcze, kulą rozdarte,
Od pysznych domów, świątyń ze złota
Więcej łez warte.

"If I were a hurricane, in an angry jolt
I would swoop like a cyclone upon the enemy army,
And I would blow caresses on your forehead tenderly,
Oh, Pasionaria!

If I were a storm, a bloody fire,
I would stand like a thunder, a fiery ball,
A black shield over the Alcázar,"
said the Communist.

"Let the angry dogs bite each other,
Let us not grieve a man's death,
Cry over Valencia, cry over Córdoba,

And pity El Greco.

Get away, you rabid dogs, from the golden columns!
Rather than your causes, this clear line of
the climbing Gothic still is more important,"
replied the artist.

My artist: also in a human body
You can find arches and vaults
The wings of angels and capitals
And a bloody altar.

Under the sign of the cross or of the hammer
A youthful body, by a bullet torn asunder,
Is worth more tears
Than exquisite houses and temples of gold.

Whereas Słonimski reflected the dilemmas of the liberal assimilationist Jewish-Polish intellectuals, Ksawery Pruszyński was perhaps a typical representative of the Catholic liberal intelligentsia descendend from landed nobility. He spoke out against the Spanish Right consistently. An example is his introduction to the Polish edition of André Malroux's novel *Hope*. Pruszyński also travelled to Spain to cover the war as a press correspondent for the prestigious *Wiadomości Literackie*. According to a Communist agent of influence, Pruszyński's dispatches

"revolutionized the consciousness of the [Polish] intelligentsia. These rather numerous circles of the intelligentsia... were beyond the reach of influence of the KPP and, moreover, they generally did not understand [the Communist party]."[159] Therefore Pruszyński's work was very welcome as a bridge to Comintern-style social radicalism. Subsequently, he published a full account of his adventures, *In Red Spain*.[160]

Predictably, Pruszyński downplayed the Soviet involvement in Spain but strongly condemned the White terror, although he knew of it only from hearsay. True, the author also recoiled from the revolutionary violence that he witnessed himself, especially the martyrdom of the clergy.[161] However, while personally professing his distaste for the Red terror, Pruszyński considered it an indispensable evil for social progress: "this country is really experiencing and truly undergoing a great, necessary revolution."[162]

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[159] Wojciech Sulewski, "Postępowa inteligencja polska w obronie Republiki Hiszpańskiej," in Bron, *Polacy*, 181.

[160] Ksawery Pruszyński, *W czerwonej Hiszpanii* (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1997) [afterward *W czerwonej*]. This was first published in 1937 in Warsaw by Towarzystwo Wydawnicze "Rój".

[161] Ibid., 41-45, 71, 99-104, 116, 133, 154-159, 180-181, 321-339.

[162] Ibid., 138.

Pruszyński recognized quite well what formed the moral base of Nationalist Spain:

> The leaders of the uprising, officers and generals, were imprisoned and put on trial. Priests and nuns were not tried. They were killed on the spot... All of them were murdered...
>
> However, I dare to believe that the popular revolution was governed by the correct instinct when it directed the entire might of its blow not against the army, not against the bankers, [and] not against the young Spain of the Falange but against the churches and convents. This was the correct instinct in a way that it dealt a blow to what was the greatest moral power which stood on its [i.e. revolution's] way. Everything that was old Spain, traditional Spain, was [also] the church... Nowhere else as much as in these borderlands of the Muslim threat, feudalism and the spirit of feudalism fused with Catholicism and created together the great structure of the modern state of Charles and Philip out of a hodgepodge of mountain kingdoms... The structure persevered [until contemporary times]... Therefore it was the correct instinct of the [revolutionary] struggle when the most beautiful churches were burned and the most beautiful masterpieces [of art] were destroyed.[163]

Pruszyński realized also that the revolutionaries in Spain used the word "fascist" rather indiscriminately. A "fascist" was whoever disagreed

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[163] Ibid., 41-43.

with them.[164] Therefore this particular liberal journalist did not reduce the Spanish Right to "fascism." He differentiated between its various parts. Pruszyński applied the word "fascism" to the Falange only, and in a sort of admiring way, as when he gently referred to José Antonio Primo de Rivera as "that boy" and to his party as that of "the young Spain." Was Pruszyński impressed by José Antonio's youthful idealism? Was the Polish journalist drawn to the Falange's progressive social platform? Pruszyński wisely provided no answers.[165] However, he was sure that since Franco had gained control over the Falange, "their nationalist revolution became a military and a *putschist* [affair], a revolution of the generals."[166] It was for Franco's military that Pruszyński reserved his sharpest barbs. Undoubtedly to incense their National Democratic admirers in Poland, he wrote with malicious delight that the generals Emilio Mola Vidal, Miguel Cabanellas y Ferrer, and Gonzalo Quiepo de Llano were freemasons. Pruszyński sneered:

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[164] Ibid., 109-112.

[165] Ibid., 243.

[166] Ibid., 243.

> All three great masters of intrigue, worshipped as idols, [are] members of [masonic] lodges... All the trump cards,... the slogans of liberalism and progress, are in the hands of the enemy. Religion is the great moral force of the uprising. Therefore the generals have begun putting on a comedy. Mola returns crosses to schools; the old Voltairian Cabanellas attends mass; Quiepo de Llano strikes religious tones in his speeches on the Sevilla radio.[167]

Pruszyński hastened to add that the original leader of the uprising, General José Sanjurjo Sacanell, was also a member of "a political mafia,... freemasonry."[168] The message was clear. An upright Polish Catholic should not support a rising led by freemasons. It is hard to shake the impression that when Pruszyński wrote about the Spanish military he really had Poland's Piłsudskite Colonels in mind.

Pruszyński unequivocally considered Carlism naively anti-modern and Spain its last "museum." "What is this Carlism, so stubbornly clinging to life, if not a remnant of European traditionalism from a hundred years ago, from the epoch of the Count de Chambord, who refused the crown

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[167] Ibid., 236-237.

[168] Ibid., 296.

for the white standard?"[169] Thus, Carlism was romantic tomfoolery. Nonetheless, Pruszyński praised "the supreme heroism of the Carlists." He also bewailed the fact that the Basque Carlists found themselves on the opposite side of the barricade from the Basque Separatists (pro-Republican nationalists), both, in his opinion, "noblemen and traditionalists."[170] Rather tellingly, considering his background, Pruszyński's favorite part of the Republican alliance was its Catholic and separatist (nationalistic) Basque orientation. He never tired of stressing the strength of their religious faith, their devotion to the national cause, and even their deference to the nobility.[171]

Finally, Pruszyński did not doubt the international aspect of the conflict in Spain. It was a fratricidal European war between Communism and Fascism, even though other orientations took part in it as well. In Spain, "if the [leftist] revolution wins, there will be a government more or

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[169] Ibid., 230.

[170] Ibid., 316.

[171] Ibid., 316, 343-399.

less similar to the Soviet one... If the [rightist] military wins, a period of fierce reaction will come."[172]

There is a tendency, in light of his subsequent, post-Second World War service in the Communist diplomacy, to interpret Pruszyński's work as influenced by the Comintern. However, the conservative commentator Izabela Sikora has argued that it would be perhaps too sinister to view Pruszyński as "an agent of Moscow." His account of Spain was not a Machiavellian attempt prescribed by the Kremlin to speak the language of Poland's Catholic intelligentsia to turn them against the Spanish Right. This was a painfully convoluted indigenous liberal effort to square the circle: To have a revolution and enjoy it, too. Nonetheless, the Comintern was handsomely able to take advantage of Pruszyński's sentiments to its own advantage. Perhaps the same verdict applies to the attitude of most of Poland's liberals towards Spain.[173]

Words into Deeds

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[172] Ibid., 50.

[173] Izabela Sikora, "Pruszyński upudrowany," *Arcana* [Kraków] 4 (1998): 163-169.

Aside from theorizing and propagandizing, what did the leftists and liberals actually do against the Spanish Right? And how did the support of the Nationalist coalition in Spain by the Polish Right translate itself into practice?

As mentioned, both the Right and the Left mounted massive and spirited propaganda campaigns to champion their favorites in Spain. To that end, various “Spanish” civic initiatives abounded. Some of those on the leftist side were undoubtedly inspired by the Comintern; others were plainly spontaneous. According to the Communist historians Tadeusz Ćwik and Leon Ziaja, those initiatives consisted of street demonstrations, strikes, fundraisers, lectures, and petition drives.[174] The Right responded with similar measures. However, their extent and intensity have not been fully researched yet. Four examples follow.

In September 1936 a mill owner near Łuków, in the Province of Lwów, donated 2,000 Polish *złoty* to Nationalist Spain. To punish him for

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[174] See Ziaja, "Polski," in Włoszczak, *Wojna*, 219-235; Ćwik, "Społeczeństwo," in Bron, *Polacy*, 48-56, 61-65.

his generosity, local leftists, undoubtedly under Communist leadership, blockaded the mill. The police and a National Party fighting squad dispersed the picket.[175]

In the fall of 1936 a group of teenage members of the secret *Narodowa Organizacja Gimnazjalna* (The Nationalist High School Organization) launched a petition drive at a high school in Lwów. The collection of signatures was a success, but the drive was interrupted by the school's liberal Piłsudskite principal, who confiscated the lists and rather gently reprimanded the organizers.[176]

In the spring of 1937 Cristina Countess Pignatelli-Pusłowska, who was part-Spanish, organized a welcoming committee to take care of the Nationalist refugees saved from the Republican Spain by Polish diplomats. In conjunction with the Polish Foreign Ministry, her committee arranged for their transportation from Gdynia to Pelplin, where the

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[175] See the Communist paper *Walka mas*, 5-6 (December 1936). A good monthly salary at the time was 100 *złoty*.

[176] Zdzisław Zakrzewski, interview by the author, San Francisco, CA, 15 June 1989, sound cassette.

Spaniards were given room, board, entertainment, and spiritual sustenance.[177]

In November 1937, Monsignor Stanisław Trzeciak delivered a public lecture in Cracow about the events in Spain. He argued that the Spanish revolution "was revenge by the Jews for what their ancestors suffered there four hundred years earlier during the Spanish Inquisition." After the lecture, "a group of nationalist students left the hall and went to Kraków's market square shouting epithets against 'Jewish communism' (Żydokomuna)."[178]

Also, the Left and Right competed to raise volunteers to fight in Spain. The Left easily won, although most Polish citizens who volunteered for International Brigades were long-time residents of France. The British historian Paul Johnson estimated the size of Poland's

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[177] Jan Ciechanowski, "Ocalić Hiszpana: Polscy dyplomaci uratowali 350 Frankistów," *Nowe Państwo* [Warszawa], 4 September 1998, 18 [afterwards "Ocalić"]; Matilde Eiroa, *Las relaciones de Franco con Europa Centro-Oriental (1939-1955)* (Barcelona: Editorial Ariel, S.A., 2001), 22 *n*. 24 [afterward *Las relaciones de Franco*].

[178] Modras, *The Catholic Church*, 172-173.

contingent of the International Brigades at about 5,000 members.[179] At least 500 Ukrainians and Belorussians served among the volunteers from Poland. Ethnic Poles accounted probably for less than 2,000, most of them unemployed immigrants in France.[180] According to the Jewish scholars

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[179] The same estimate was given by the Communist scholars of the Wanda Wasilewska Military Historical Institute in Warsaw. See Paul Johnson, *Modern Times: The World from the Twenties to the Nineties*, Revised Edition (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991), 330; and płk. dr. Marek Tarczyński, ed., *Hiszpańska wojna narodoworewolucyjna 1936-1939 i udział w niej Polaków* (Warszawa: Nakładem Wydawnictwa "Czasopisma Wojskowe," 1986), 47.

[180] As a Jewish Communist in France complained, "they [i.e. the Comintern recruiters] came or sent their emissaries to organize the Poles in Rouen and its environs, but they were unsuccessful. The emigrants in this region were very religious and did not care for Communists. The group of Jewish Communists was much larger... In Rouen, not a single Pole was a member of the [Communist] Party. We managed to contact several readers of Polish newspapers; none were willing to volunteer, nor did we dare suggest that they do. As for the Jews who belonged to the Party, the situation was completely different [but they also did not want to go to Spain]... [Finally,] five people from Rouen reported: an Armenian, two German refugees, [the Latvian] Boris [Cejtlis] and I." See Alexander [Eliasz] Szurek, *The Shattered Dream* (Boulder, CO, and New York: East European Monographs and Columbia University Press, 1989), 83, 85 [afterward *Shattered*].

Arno Lustiger and Lenni Brenner, Polish Jews constituted 2,250 (45%) of the volunteers.[181]

Unlike in France, leftist propaganda in Poland was less successful in attracting volunteers to fight against "fascism" in Spain. Although the Comintern maintained a semi-official recruitment post in Katowice, it attracted only an estimated 500 domestic volunteers. Various Communist and Communist-front groups financed and smuggled these volunteers through the Polish-Czechoslovak border to the Comintern recruitment center in Prague.[182]

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[181] See Arno Lustiger, *Schalom Libertad! Juden im spanischen Bürgerkrieg* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1991), 61; Lenni Brenner, *Zionism in the Age of Dictators* (Westport, CT, London, and Canberra: Lawrence Hill and Croom Helm, 1983), 173. According to G.E. Sichon, Poland supplied 4,000 members of the International Brigades, including 896 Jews. However, Sichon arrived at this figure by scrutinizing names of the volunteers. This is an unreliable method. Many Jewish volunteers customarily changed their Yiddish-sounding names to Polish ones. Also, Sichon excessively relied upon data published in Communist Poland. The ethnic Polish Communist authorities often sought -- for anti-Semitic reasons -- to suppress or at least to downplay the fact of the Jewish participation in the Communist movement. This was done to show that the roots of Communism in Poland were not "Jewish" but "Polish". See G.E. Sichon, "Polacy pochodzenia żydowskiego jako ochotnicy w wojnie domowej w Hiszpanii (1936-1939)," *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* [Warsaw] no. 172-174 (October 1994-June 1995): 79-85. On the volunteers from Poland in the International Brigades see also Thomas, *Spanish*, 298-304; a review of Lustiger's work by Stanislaw Dabrowski in *The Polish Review* 3 (1993): 342-347; and Pruszyński, *W czerwonej*, 146-149.

[182] Leon Chajn, "O przerzutach polskich ochotników przez granicę," in Bron, *Polacy*, 73-77.

Scholarship on the volunteers of the Right is practically non-existent. At this point it is impossible even to determine how many Poles fought on Franco's side. Perhaps 100 is as good a guess as any. It is certain, however, that these volunteers were overwhelmingly Catholics. Unlike at least some of their counterparts on the Republican side, they were highly motivated idealists. The presence of Polish participants on the Nationalist side has recently been acknowledged by José Luís de Mesa. At least some of these Poles enlisted with the Carlist *Requeté*.[183]

One of them, Tadeusz Ungar, was a radical nationalist law student from Lwów. He fled Poland to avoid arrest by the police. In Prague, lacking the funds to travel to Spain otherwise, Ungar enlisted with the Comintern volunteers. On the way, he established contact with Polish military intelligence. Once in Spain, Ungar deserted from the International Brigades and went over to the Nationalist side, where he fought with distinction. Ungar admitted that both sides had committed atrocities but,

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[183] De Mesa mentions (at p. 251-55) that also some Jews fought against the Reds but it is impossible to determine whether any of the Jewish volunteers in the White ranks were Polish citizens, although it is quite possible. See José Luís de Mesa, *Los Otros Internacionales: Voluntarios extranjeros desconocidos en el Bando Nacional durante la Guerra Civil (1936-1939)* (Madrid: Ediciones Barbarroja, 1998), 191-210 [afterward *Los Otros Internacionales*]; A.M., "'Los Otros Internacionales'," *Boletín Carlista de Madrid* (Febrero-Marzo 1999).

nonetheless, he stressed that a "Red" victory would have been an unmitigated tragedy for Spain.[184] As Ungar unabashedly put it, "After all, Communism is the worst mutation of cancer – rabies of the brain. General Franco was right to have said that it could only be exterminated with very drastic measures: a bullet in the head."[185] There were other Poles like Ungar.

Recently, the Iberian specialist Cezary Taracha of the Catholic University of Lublin has described Antoni Pardo who fought against the "Reds" in the Spanish Foreign Legion. Pardo participated in the struggle for Zaragoza and was wounded at the battle of Ebro. He was decorated for

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[184] The rest of Ungar's (1912-1994) adventures are equally interesting. He continued to work for the Polish intelligence. In 1939 he was posted in Berlin as an undercover agent and managed to flee to Poland with secret materials a day before the Second World War broke out. During the campaign of September 1939, he fought against the Nazis and the Soviets. Ungar escaped, first, from Soviet captivity and, then, from a Rumanian internment camp. In the Spring of 1940 he arrived in France (via Yugoslavia and Italy), where he joined the Polish army-in-exile. Ungar fought in the French campaign in May and June 1940. He was decorated with the highest Polish award for valor, the Virtuti Militari Cross. After the fall of France, Ungar eluded German captivity and trekked to the south. He eventually stowed away on an Italian ship and arrived in Casablanca in 1941. He narrowly avoided arrest by the Gestapo, stole a bicycle, and escaped alone across the Sahara to Senegal, which was held by the Free French. Next, he joined the Polish Navy as signals officer. Ungar participated in the invasions of Sicily and Normandy. After the war, he enlisted in the American-approved Polish "guard companies" in Germany, hoping to liberate Poland. Ungar attempted to join the French forces in Vietnam, but finally settled in the US instead. See Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, "Niesforny Pan Tadziu," *Myśl Polska* [Warszawa], 7 July 1996, [magazine insert] *Dodatek: Naprzód Polsko!*, 6 (July 1996): II.

[185] Tadeusz Ungar, *Nie całkiem niesforne myśli* (Chicago: Wydawnictwo Panorama, 1998), 98-99.

valor and promoted to lieutenant. There were other Poles in the Foreign Legion as well.[186] In addition, some Poles volunteered for the Nationalist Air Force. Perhaps a score of Polish pilots flew for Franco.[187] According to a Communist source, they were mostly "from the circles of the landed nobility."[188] The news about their trip to fight in Spain was registered in the *Kurier Warszawski* [Warsaw Courier] of November 19, 1936. Moreover, the Warsaw tabloid *Nowy Wieczór* (New Evening) serialized the exploits of the bomber pilot Tadeusz Strychowski (Strychski?) against the "Red" airforce over Madrid. Were the pilots noblemen? A recent source named the Ciastuła brothers of Biłgoraj, in the Province of Lublin, as Polish airmen who had flown combat missions in Spain. To be sure,

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[186] Among the Legionaries, a Spanish scholar mentions Walenty Adam Heuchert, Józef Sroka, Antoni Szypuła, Sergiusz Klin, Oskar Jan Cywich aka Cywicz, and Kazimierz Rawiski. Cavalry Captain Wieńczysław Łukaszewicz (Wenceslao de Lucasiewicz), Zbigniew Kantecki (Zbiguendo Cantiecekki), Colonel Andrzej Prince Radziwiłł, and Jerzy Kochanowski (Georges de Kochanowsky) fought in White (émigré) Russian units attached to the Carlists. See de Mesa, *Los Otros Internacionales*, 83, 95, 97-98, 198; Cezary Taracha, "Ocalić od zapomnienia," *Najwyższy Czas!* [Warsaw], 23 August 1997, II; Cezary Taracha and Wacław Pardo, "Polski legionista generała Franco," *Nowy Przegląd Wszechpolski* [Lublin] no. 3-4 (1997): 21-23; Wacław Pardo, *Polski legionista generała Franco*, ed. by Cezary Taracha (Radom: Polskie Wydawnictwo Encyklopedyczne, 2001).

[187] Spanish sources cite the following names of pilots: Kazimierz Lasocki, Tadeusz Czarkowski-Gajewski, Kazimierz Lubiński, Adam Szarek, Tadeusz Strychski (Strychowski?), Tadeusz Bujakowski, and Count Orłowski. See de Mesa, *Los Otros Internacionales*, 196-98.

[188] Ćwik, "Społeczeństwo," in Bron, *Polacy*, 60.

they were not of noble descent. Their father was a lower level government bureaucrat of modest origin.[189] Finally, General Stanisław Bułak-Bałachowicz, a Polish-Belorussian hero of the war against the Bolsheviks, allegedly served as a military advisor on Franco's staff.[190] The topic of Polish volunteers clearly requires further research both in Spanish and Polish archives.

The presence of Poles on Franco's side is beyond any doubt. Why so few? First, the Warsaw government forbade anyone to participate in the struggle in Spain on the pain of losing Polish citizenship. Most Polish patriots would have considered this a calamity and hence balked at volunteering. Next, it was quite costly to travel to Spain, and no counterrevolutionary internationalist counterpart to the Comintern existed to foot the bill and to organize the logistics. Hence, with some exceptions only the wealthy or the well-connected could afford the trip. Then, the Spanish Nationalists were none too eager about foreign volunteers. They much preferred war materiel and money. Last but not least, the Polish

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[189] Bronisław Jaśkiewicz, "Bracia Ciastułowie uczesnicy [sic] wojny domowej w Hiszpanii," *Nowy Przegląd Wszechpolski* no. 5-6 (1997): 25.

[190] Wojciech Jerzy Muszyński, interview with MJCh, 6 May 1999, Gdańsk.

right-wing opinion was divided about the question of volunteering for Franco.

In November 1936 in the *Dziennik Bydgoski* (Bydgoszcz Daily) Wincenty Lutosławski proposed organizing a Polish legion to fight for the Spanish Nationalists. The Polish émigré journal *Narodowiec* (Nationalist) in Paris published Franco's invitation to enlist in the Spanish Foreign Legion. The results of such appeals remain unknown. However, it is doubtful they were very successful. The reason for this was that the main source of potential volunteers, the Nationalist movement in Poland, generally opposed Polish involvement in foreign wars. The National Democrats still smarted from the Napoleonic misadventure and all other occasions in the 19th century when Polish volunteers flocked to foreign banners to fight under the slogan "For our Freedom and Yours" (*Za naszą wolność i waszą*) in other people's revolutions and wars of national liberation only to be discarded afterwards. The *Endeks* felt that this was not the way to advance the cause of Poland. Moreover, they felt surrounded by Germany and Russia, expecting an attack on their nation at any time. Polish volunteers would be needed in Poland, they held. Finally,

there was plenty of need to fight Communist subversion at home. However, even the Polish Nationalists were torn as far as Spain was concerned. As Jędrzej Giertych admitted:

> If I were to follow the reflex of my feelings, I would put a red beret of the *Requeté* on and enlist in their fighting ranks... Unfortunately, I am not allowed to follow this reflex. We are in an extraordinary position. We are absent from Spain not because we would not like to go there but because the exceptionally great tasks, which await us at home, do not allow us to abandon our post. I must be at home, and we must all remain here. Nothing but duty dictates this to us.[191]

Beyond spreading pro-Nationalist propaganda, there was very little Poland's Rightist parties could do for Franco's Spain without the resources of the state.

Government Policy Towards Spain

The Piłsudskite *Sanacja* government involved itself most vigorously in Spanish affairs. After all, the Piłsudskites ran the government in Poland.

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[191] Giertych, *Hiszpania*, 12-13.

They supported the Spanish Nationalist coalition through propaganda and diplomacy. However, naturally, their support extended only as far as what they considered to be Poland's best interest. To put it plainly, the Polish government wanted to safeguard Poland's security and to profit from the conflict. Thus, the official policy of the Polish government at times conflicted with the interests of the Spanish Right.

According to a Communist historian, the Foreign Minister Józef Beck instructed Poland's representative in the Leaugue of Nations, Tytus Komarnicki, to prevent the internationalization of the Civil War in Spain. Polish diplomats believed that the involvement of the great powers in the Spanish conflict was inimical to Poland's interest and, therefore, frequently spoke out against it. These efforts were seconded by Count Edward Raczyński and Andrzej Jażdżewski, Poland's representatives on the Non-Intervention Committee in London. Once Germany and Italy sent their troops to Spain, Poland opposed counter-intervention by other powers, which infuriated the Soviets. However, it was in Poland's interest to maintain peace on the continent. A European war meant the offensive of

German *revanchism* in the east and the export of the Bolshevik revolution to the West. In both cases Poland would be a target.

Likewise, the Polish government followed its national interest rather than ideological preferences as far as diplomatic recognition for the Franco regime was concerned. Warsaw recognized the government in Burgos in February 1939 only after its allies in Paris and London did. However, already in November 1936, the Polish Embassy in Madrid received specific instructions from the Polish government that in case the Spanish capital fell to the Nationalists, Poland's diplomatic representatives were to recognize a new government forthwith. In the Fall of 1937 at the latest, the Ambassador Marian Szumlakowski established secret links to the Franco regime in Burgos. Later, having moved to San Sebastián, Szumlakowski continued to serve as Poland's envoy to the Republic but, at the same time, was nominated a diplomatic liaison with the Nationalist government in the Fall of 1938. When Poland recognized Nationalist Spain, Szumlakowski became Ambassador in Madrid, and Juan Serrat,

who had been Franco's unofficial diplomatic liaison in Poland throughout the war, became the Spanish envoy in Warsaw.[192]

The relationship of the Polish Embassy in Madrid with the Spanish Right did not limit itself to diplomatic affairs. According to Jan Ciechanowski, in July and August 1936, the Polish legation gave asylum to approximately 350 Spanish refugees from the revolutionary terror. The decision was made by a junior diplomat, Leopold Koziebrodzki because the Ambassador Szumlakowski and most of his staff were away in Poland. In Madrid, Koziebrodzki and two of his colleagues braved armed mobs that were incited by revolutionary propaganda to attack the embassy of "fascist" Poland. After his return to Spain, in January 1937 Ambasador Szumlakowski negotiated with the Republican government to evacuate women, children, and other non-combatants hiding at the Polish legation. The government consented. The refugees were to be interned in Poland for the duration of the conflict. They were chosen among those Spaniards who had the most to fear from the revolutionaries. Altogether between

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[192] Ćwik, "Społeczeństwo," in Bron, *Polacy*, 57-58; Chodakiewicz, *Zagrabiona*, 89; Thomas, *Spanish*, 583-585, 590; Eiroa, *Las relaciones de Franco*, 21-22, 45-48.

February and May 1937, 110 people left the Polish Embassy in three groups to embark on the Polish warship *Wilia*. There were at least nine Nationalist officers among them; one, Captain José Páramo Alofaro, was disguised as the Polish Ambassador himself. The most prominent among the asylum-seekers were the future general and the minister of aviation Eduardo Gallarza, the future minister of industry Juan Antonio Suañes Fernández, and Franco's close personal friend Colonel Carlos Silva Rivera. Once the refugees were safe in Poland, the Poles allowed them to return to the Nationalist part of Spain, thus breaking the official pledge to the Republican government. Military men and political activists promptly returned home. The rest of the Spanish refugees survived the war either in Poland or at Polish diplomatic enclaves in Madrid.[193]

In terms of military assistance, the Piłsudskite government secretly sponsored the participation of the Polish pilots in the Spanish war. The government also extended valuable technical help to the Nationalist coalition. According to a Communist historian, a number of military

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[193] Jacewicz, *Miranda*, 41; Jan Ciechanowski, "Ocalić Hiszpana: Polscy dyplomaci uratowali 350 Frankistów," *Nowe Państwo*, 4 September 1998, 18; Eiroa, *Las relaciones de Franco*, 21-22, 46-47.

officers were dispatched to advise Franco about Soviet forces active in Spain. Such trips were also in Poland's best interest. The Poles were allowed to inspect captured Soviet equipment and observe tank battles. They also familiarized themselves with the practice of modern warfare. In particular, they paid close attention to the exploits of the German air force. Later, these valuable observations of the Polish technical and intelligence experts were made part of the staff training of the Polish army.[194]

Although officially the Polish government pledged itself to observe the international embargo on the arms sales to Spain, the Piłsudskites broke it, unofficially supplying both sides. The persons particularly active in the trade were the businessmen Stefan Katelbach and Alfred Jurzykowski.[195] The Polish historian Marian Zagórniak discovered that between July 28, 1936, and October 1, 1937, the Polish government sold weapons to Spain for $23 million (at the current value of the time). However, Zagórniak was unable to establish complete statistics on the

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[194] de Mesa, *Los Otros Internacionales*, 196-98; Kazimierz Sobczak, "Hiszpania w latach 1936-1939 wojskowym poligonem doświadczalnym (Oświetlenie polskie)," in Włoszczak, *Wojna*, 125-168; Zagórniak, "Wojna," 445-450.

[195] The letter of Kornelia Irena Ruszkowska to MJCH, 27 August 1997; the letter of Andrzej Ruszkowski to MJCH, 13 July 1999.

arms sales to Spain.[196] Following up on his research, the historian Marek Piotr Deszczyński explained that the Polish government

> supplied weapons to both sides, albeit to the great advantage of the Republican side. The political sympathies of the authorities of the Second [Polish] Commonwealth, which were of course closer to General Franco, did not play a role here. It was commercial considerations that mattered (the 'Reds' had the financial reserves of Spain at their disposal)...
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> Between 1936 and 1938 Poland sold to the Spanish military equipment worth about 190 million [Polish] złoty (around 36 million US dollars). This constituted almost 2/3 of value of the entire Polish arms export in the interwar period. Thanks to this [Spanish trade], the Polish Army got rid of nearly its entire supply of old weapons, and national [Polish] factories sold a part of their new production [of arms] (at times defective [and] rejected by quality control of the Polish Army). The [Spanish] recipients paid for the shipments in cash, hard currency, and gold. The money received from Spanish contracts contributed to saving the hard currency balance of the [Polish] state. The sums received from the sale of old war materiel were handed over by the military authorities to the Fund for National Defense.[197]

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[196] Zagórniak, "Wojna," 442.

[197] Marek Piotr Deszczyński, "Polska Hiszpanii," *Karta* [Warszawa] 12 (1994): 94 [afterwards "Polska"].

In July 1938, in view of Franco's imminent victory, Poland's Foreign Minister Józef Beck suspended arms sales to the Republicans for fear of endangering "future relations with united Nationalist Spain."[198] The suspension remained in force despite the intervention of Lieutenant Colonel Aleksander Kędzior, Poland's military attaché in Lisbon and a top intelligence expert on Spain. Kędzior claimed that the Republican side still had sufficient reserves of gold to pay for the weapons shipments. Besides, Nazi Germany sold arms to the "Reds", while also assisting the Nationalists. Furthermore, Kędzior argued that

> the moral considerations which can be at play here do not appear to be vital for me because the conduct of the current war and its aims cannot inspire respect towards the side of General Franco... Our [national] interest in the future in no way seems to be endangered because the victory of Franco is not certain at all and that of the government [i.e. Republican] side cannot be excluded.[199]

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[198] "Pismo Józefa Becka, ministra spraw zagranicznych do gen. bryg. Wacława Stachiewicza, szefa Sztabu Głównego, ściśle tajne," 11 July 1938, in Deszczyński, "Polska," 101.

[199] "Raport ppłk. dypl. Aleksandra Kędziora, *attachè* wojskowego przy poselstwie RP w Lizbonie do płk. dypl. Tadeusza Pełczyńskiego, szefa Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego, Tajne," 22 October 1938, in Deszczyński, "Polska," 102.

Kędzior's advice was rejected.

As the issue of the arms trade plainly demonstrates, the stance of the Piłsudskite government was not always sympathetic towards the Nationalist coalition. Moreover, throughout the duration of the conflict the *Sanacja* regime tolerated Soviet secret intelligence agents in Gdynia and Warsaw who purchased weapons for the Republican Spain. The government also tolerated a Comintern recruiting station in Katowice. Finally, it allowed the press to defend the Republic and attack the Nationalists (and vice versa).[200] According to a liberal writer, "Polish official spheres sympathized with White Spain. But Ksawery Pruszyński wrote absolutely everything to the contrary in the *Wiadomości Literackie*."[201] A Communist agent of influence marveled that “it is worth paying attention to and worth pondering why, despite the fact of the exceptional vehemence and viciousness of the [leftist propaganda] attack directed at the official [press] organ of the *Sanacja*, despite the

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[200] Chodakiewicz, *Zagrabiona*, 90; Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, “Sowiecka Hiszpania,” *Arcana* no. 4-5 (46-47) (Fall 2002): 281-85; John M. Bates, "Freedom of the Press in Inter-War Poland: The System of Control," *Poland between the Wars, 1918-1939*, edited by Peter D. Stachura (London and New York: Macmillan Press Ltd. and St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1998), 87-109.

[201] Paweł Jasienica (Lech Beynar), *Pamiętnik* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 1989), 106.

glorification of Republican Spain, so detested at the time in the government circles, and despite the open praise of the Soviet Union, contemporary censorship [behaved]... as if it had frozen in fear, [and] did not attempt to interfere with even one word."[202]

The government in Warsaw however threatened to strip all Polish citizens who volunteered to fight in Spain of their citizenship which also meant that they would be barred from returning home. Of course, the punishment touched the members of the International Brigades most of all. Poland did not need any more revolutionaries. Yet, there is no evidence that any Pole fighting on the Nationalist side lost his citizenship.

Thus, never abandoning the principle of national self-interest, the government of Poland successfully combined the customary obfuscation of international politics with its ideological affinities both to make money on the war and to assist the Spanish Right.

Poland's Spanish Memories

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[202] Bibrowski, "Kampania," in Bron, *Polacy*, 176-177.

The conflict in Spain was immediately overshadowed by the calamity of the Second World War. Nonetheless, Spanish memories lingered for many years afterwards in Poland and among the Poles in exile. Some had their perceptions of Spain reinforced by their post-1939 Spanish adventures. Most, however, had those memories submerged by the victory of Communism in Poland following the Second World War.

Between 1944 and 1989 the Comintern version of the Civil War in Spain in general and of the Spanish Right in particular was *de rigueur* in Warsaw. A stifled admiration for the Spanish Right persevered in deepest secrecy among a few descendants of the Polish anti-Communist elites, the Catholic intelligentsia in particular. However, a more positive image of Franco's Spain, in war and peace, survived chiefly within the émigré community in the West. Finally, after 1989, a plurality of opinion about Spain freely reasserted itself in Poland.

The post-1939 perception of Spain by the Poles was shaped by the way the Spaniards conducted themselves towards the enemies of Poland and towards Polish anti-Communists. Madrid reacted with shock to the Hitler-Stalin Pact of August 1939 and the subsequent invasion and

partition of Poland between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Publicly, Franco expressed his concern over the expansion of Communism into Europe. Privately, he was angry with Germany for crushing Catholic Poland. Therefore, the Spanish regime continued to recognize the Republic of Poland and its Government-in-Exile. At first, Madrid explained to Berlin rather ingeniously that it recognized the free Poles as representing that part of Poland that was occupied by the Soviet Union. Later, after June 1941, Franco continued to accord recognition to free Poles, even though Germany occupied all of Poland until January 1944. When the Soviets seized Poland afterwards, Madrid refused to deal with the Communist puppet regime in Warsaw. The Spanish authorities maintained diplomatic links to the Polish Government-in-Exile for at least 20 years after the Second World War.[203]

During the war itself, the Spanish government assisted the Poles as long as Poland's actions did not jeopardize Madrid's neutrality. The most

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[203] Eiroa, *Las relaciones de Franco*, 45-58, 70-71, 78, 80, 82, 85-86, 93-95, 122-27, 132; Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, "Pragmatism and Sympathy: Franco and East-Central Europe, 1939-1955," *Sarmatian Review*, Vol. XXIII, no. 1 (January 2003): 931-36, also in *Intermarium: The First Online Journal of East Central European Postwar History and Politics, Columbia University* Vol. 4, no. 3 (2000-2001).

pertinent issue in the Polish-Spanish relations at the time was the question of Polish military and civilian refugees, many of whom found themselves on what was officially Spanish soil. In 1944, for example, Lieutenant Jędrzej Giertych escaped from a POW camp in Germany and sought asylum at the Spanish Embassy in Berlin. Unfortunately, fearing provocation, a lower level diplomat called the Gestapo and the Polish officer was recaptured. This incident was an exception.[204]

A number of other Polish supporters of the Spanish Right experienced the Franco regime first hand when they illegally trespassed on Spanish territory on the way to England after the fall of France in 1940.

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[204] During the war of 1939 Jędrzej Giertych fought with distinction against the Nazis on the Hel Peninsula. His unit went into action on September 1, was immediately cut off and encircled, but surrendered only on October 2, 1939. Giertych was taken prisoner. Between 1939 and 1944 he escaped over a score of times from a POW camp, only to be recaptured by the Germans. Giertych survived the imprisonment and, despite the bitterly disappointing incident in Berlin, he continued to cherish the Catholic and Nationalist Spain. In 1945 and 1946 Giertych established a radio station (*Radio Maryja*) on board of a ship off the coast of Soviet-occupied Poland. Emulating General Gonzalo Quiepo de Llano, he beamed prayers and anti-Communist harangues to the Poles, while sailing along the Polish coast. Although Giertych eluded capture by the Soviet and Polish Communist vessels, his broadcasting was cut short by the British authorities. Nonetheless, this maverick managed to spirit his wife and seven children out of Poland. He eventually settled in England, where he continued to be very active in the National Democratic politics until his death in 1992. See Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, "Giertych, Jędrzej," *Biographical Dictionary of East and Central Europe in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Wojciech Roszkowski (a bilingual version will be published simultaneously in the US by M.E Sharpe and in Poland by the State Scientific Publishers) (forthcoming).

Many of them were interned in the concentration camp of Miranda de Ebro near the Pyrenees. The cadet officer Zdzisław Zakrzewski, who had collected signatures for the Spanish Nationalists in his Lwów highschool, was annoyed at his imprisonment in Spain but considered it a rather mild inconvenience in comparison with his other war-time misadventures. However, another anti-Communist Polish internee, Bolesław Wysocki, developed a life-long aversion towards the Spanish Right in general and Franco in particular.[205] The diary of the conservative Alfons Jacewicz, who was a senior Polish inmate in Miranda, sheds some light on his state of mind and, presumably, that of some of his younger colleagues. When Jacewicz witnessed the departure of *La División Azul* (The Blue Division) "of volunteers going to the Bolshevik front," he sighed:

> I would gladly travel with these Spaniards and not only because they will probably be crossing through Poland, and maybe even through Volhynia, where my closest family has remained, but also because the struggle against Communism is a matter of principle for me. I fought against them [the Communists] anywhere I could: in the Armies of Denikin,

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[205] Zdzisław Zakrzewski, interview by MJCH, San Francisco, CA, 15 June 1989, sound cassette; Bolesław A. Wysocki, *On the River Ebro: Urge to Live* (Cambridge, Mass.: [No publisher], 1986).

> Wrangel, and in the Polish army. But now I am forced to sit still in a Spanish concentration camp.[206]

Nonetheless, the Spanish authorities treated the interned Poles perhaps with a little bit more consideration than they did other nationalities. After all, the head of the Polish Red Cross in Spain was Prince August Czartoryski, whose wife, née Princess Dolores Borbón-Parma, wielded some influence in Spanish Nationalist circles. She helped free some of the Poles. Moreover, initially, the Polish inmates of Miranda even enjoyed visiting privileges in the adjacent town. These were revoked most likely because of a high incidence of escapes. However, Jacewicz complained that "because the Polish embassy [in Madrid] did not take interest in us, the Spaniards always suspected us of Communism, which of course infuriated every one of us."[207] In fact, despite the pressure of German diplomacy, Ambassador Marian Szumlakowski managed to secure the release of small groups of Polish prisoners. Eventually, in 1942, after they had orchestrated a camp-wide hunger strike, the Spanish

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[206] Jacewicz, *Miranda,* 38.

[207] Jacewicz, *Miranda,* 128.

government released all of the Poles to join the Polish Armed Forces in England.

The Spanish government intervened at least once more on behalf of the Polish anti-Communist soldiers. More precisely, General Franco offered asylum to the underground guerrilla Holy Cross Brigade of the National Armed Forces (*Brygada Świętokrzyska Narodowych Sił Zbrojnych – BŚ NSZ*), which had managed to retreat from Poland before

the entry of the Red Army.[208] In August 1946, at a secret meeting with the commander-in-chief of the NSZ General Zygmunt Broniewski ("Bogucki"), General Franco proposed that this unit of the Polish national-radical guerrillas be transported from Germany to Spanish Morocco, where many of the men would most likely become an autonomous part of the Spanish Foreign Legion. However, this rescue plan was not

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[208] Dubbed after a small mountain range in central Poland, the Holy Cross Brigade was formed in August 1944 mostly out of the partisan units subordinated to the National Radical Camp (ONR-ABC) that had fought, since 1939, against both the Nazis and the Communists. The Brigade continued its struggle against both enemies. At that time, in the view of the Red Army's advance into Poland, the national radicals of the NSZ targeted the Communist guerrillas and the Soviet NKVD commandos. In January 1945, caught beetween the Soviet offensive and the German defense, the Holy Cross Brigade surrendered to the Germans. The Polish partisans were permitted to cross the front lines. They retreated with the *Wehrmacht* and reached Bohemia in March 1945. Despite persistent Nazi offers, these Poles refused to fight on their side, although they feigned collaboration in anti-Soviet intelligence matters. In the middle of April, the Holy Cross Brigade mutinied, abandoned its quarters, and marched west. In May 1945 it fought its last battles against the Nazis. Most importantly, these Poles liberated a concentration camp in Holýšov (Holleischen), which was a sub-camp of the KL (concentration camp) Flossenburg, freeing about 2,000 female inmates, including almost 300 Jewish women who were about to be burned alive by the Nazis. Moreover, some units of the Holy Cross Brigade linked up with the US Third Army and fought alongside of it against the Germans. After the cessation of the hostilities, the British prevented the Polish partisans from joining the Polish Armed Forces in the West. The Soviets and the puppet Communist regime in Warsaw demanded that the Holy Cross Brigade be turned over to them. Fortunately, General George Patton intervened on their behalf. The Polish partisans were moved from Bohemia to Bavaria. They were then enrolled in the US-led guard companies. See Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne: "Ząb" przeciw dwu wrogom* (Warszawa: Fronda, 1999); Leszek Żebrowski, ed., *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne: Dokumenty, struktury, personalia, 3 Volumes* (Warszawa: Burchard Edition, 1994-1996); Zbigniew S. Siemaszko, *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne* (London: Odnowa, 1982); Antoni Dąbrowski [Szacki-Skarbek], *Byłem dowódcą Brygady Świętokrzyskiej Narodowych Sił Zbrojnych: Pamiętnik dowódcy, świadectwa żołnierzy, dokumenty* (London: Veritas Foundation Publication Centre, 1984); Władysław Marcinkowski "Jaxa," *Wspomnienia, 1934-1945* (Warszawa: Burchard Edition, 1998).

implemented because meanwhile General George Patton had saved the Holy Cross Brigade from the Soviets, and the U.S. Army employed the erstwhile Polish guerrillas as guards at American military installations through Western Germany. Nonetheless, Franco maintained links to General Władysław Anders of the Free Polish Forces in the West. The Spanish dictator was willing to enroll the Poles, Slovaks, Czechs, Ukrainians, and others in the Spanish Foreign Legion to fight Communism.[209]

Official Spanish assistance to the Poles also materialized in the field of education. The Polish Catholic émigré community gladly accepted offers of scholarships from Franco's government. A Polish Catholic network helped gather young Poles, who found themselves in Germany after the conclusion of the Second World War, and helped some of them go to Spain. A number of Polish students attended Spanish institutions of higher learning with full scholarships of the *Obra Católica de Asistencia Universitaria*. "These scholarships were better than French and even

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[209] See Eiroa, *Las relaciones de Franco,* 116, 121-22; and the letter of Stanisław Żochowski to MJCh, 29 February 1997. Colonel Żochowski was an erstwhile chief-of-staff of the NSZ. After the war, he resided in Australia until his death in 1999.

English scholarships, which were quite valued by the Poles."[210] The education acquired in Spain prepared many Polish émigrés for future lives in the West.

Only a few of these graduates remained in Spain. They were joined by a handful of die-hard anti-Communists from Poland. Arguably the most prominent among them were the leading diplomat Count Józef Potocki[211] and the poet Józef Łobodowski. An ex-leftist and erstwhile enemy of Nationalist Spain, Łobodowski fought the Nazis in Poland in September 1939, escaped to Western Europe, and was eventually interned in Spain. After the war, this celebrated poet, along with Mirosław Sokołowski and others, became the *spiritus movens* behind the Polish section of Radio Madrid.[212] According to an émigré novelist, "its consistently Catholic and conservative brand of anti-Communism provided the die-hard Polish audience with much needed ideological sustenance that the American-

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[210] The letter of Kornelia Irena Ruszkowska to MJCh, 27 August 1997. A Catholic activist, Madame Ruszkowska participated in the network. See also Eiroa, *Las relaciones de Franco*, 139, 148-51.

[211] Eiroa, *Las relaciones de Franco*, 122-23, 168.

[212] The letter of Kornelia Irena Ruszkowska to MJCH, 27 August 1997; Matuszewski and Pollak, *Poezja*, 2: 324; Eiroa, *Las relaciones de Franco*, 151-54.

backed Polish group at the Radio Free Europe in Munich could only have dreamt of reciprocating in its all too often liberal equivocations."[213]

Needless to say, in Poland, Radio Madrid was very popular among those who had supported the Spanish Right during the Civil War and who had fought against both the Nazis and the Communists during the Second World War. In their environment immediately after the war, memories of victorious Catholic Spain provided hope in the struggle against Communism. These recollections were reflected in the popular perception of the Soviet Union and in the propaganda of the anti-Communist resistance. Again, this topic has not been researched sufficiently. The following four examples were culled from a secret police internal circulation document.

In September 1947 peasants in the County of Płońsk near Warsaw refused to send their children for paramilitary training ordered by the Communist regime because they feared that "these young people will be sent to Russia or *to Spain, where they will fight as partisans against*

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[213] Henryk Skwarczyński, interview by MJCH, 9 May 1999, Chicago.

Franco [emphasis added]."[214] Similar fears surfaced among the Catholic clergy as well. In the summer of 1945, in the Province of Warsaw, priests circulated a leaflet predicting that "Spain, France, and Italy will be flooded by Bolshevism, Paris will be burned, Marseilles will collapse, and the Pope will flee, but it will all end propitiously with victory over godless Communism and then peace will reign. Russia will be pushed beyond the Urals, and small states will be founded in the European part of Russia."[215]

More concrete references to Spain appeared in the anti-Communist underground press, reflecting its concerns about ongoing Soviet subversion in Western Europe. For instance, in October 1948, commenting on a recent wave of strikes and demonstrations in France allegedly incited by Moscow, the insurgent newssheet *Wolna Polska* (Free Poland) expressed its opinion that

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[214] *Biuletyn Informacyjny* 17, 30 September 1947, in *Biuletyny Informacyjne Ministerstwa Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego, Tom 1: 1947*, edited by Bernadetta Gronek and Irena Marczak (Warszawa: Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych, 1993), 183 [afterward *Biuletyny 1947*].

[215] *Biuletyn Informacyjny* 17/39, 1 September 1948, in *Biuletyny Informacyjne Ministerstwa Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego, Tom 2: 1948*, edited by Bernadetta Gronek, Irena Marczak, and Marek Olkuśnik (Warszawa: Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych, 1995), 156 [afterward *Biuletyny 1948*].

> a similar thing has occurred in Spain. The Soviet Union and the countries of the people's democracy have persecuted and denounced the system, which they call fascist. Spain is a country where a revolution financed by Soviet Russia and Jewish elements did not end in the victory of the Communists but was crowned with the victory of the armies of General Franco. Desiring to re-ignite the fire of the revolution, the USSR has cast a hateful eye on Spain.[216]

For Poland's insurgents, Spain figured as a relevant symbol of the anti-Communist struggle. Probably in June 1948, a resistance group from the environs of Suwałki in the northeast of Poland issued its call to action:

> We have sacrificed our lives only for the defense of the [Catholic] faith and only for the love of our Poland and we shall fight to the last drop of blood in our veins... *Let pre-war Spain serve as our example.* On into the battle and let God, faith, and the love of our fellows and the Fatherland reside in our hearts! God bless the insurgents [emphasis added].[217]

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[216] Kpt. "Lot" [Stanisław Kozłowski?], "Wpływy ZSRR na arenie międzynarodowej," *Wolna Polska: Tygodniowe Pismo Polskiego Związku Wyzwoleńczego* [Radom?], vol. 1, no. 3-4 (1948?) in *Biuletyn Informacyjny* 20/42, 15 October 1948, in Gronek, Marczak, and Olkuśnik, *Biuletyny 1948*, 178.

[217] *Biuletyn Informacyjny* 15/37, 29 July 1948, in Gronek, Marczak, and Olkuśnik, *Biuletyny 1948*, 137-138.

In July 1948, the "Insurgents of Catholic Poland" issued a leaflet opposing collectivization, which uncannily rings with Carlist-like rhetoric (*sans El Rey*):

> *our eyes and our thoughts are to be turned towards pre-war Spain, whose nation, not sparing its blood and lives, vanquished the enemy of the Church and the tyrant of humanity.* Faced with such an alternative,... the Polish nation stands in the ranks of the [anti-Communist] insurgents and will wait for America and consider her the principle for Poland's liberation... The insurgents of Catholic Poland and the [Polish] London government [in Exile] has [sic have] issued a proclamation to the Polish nation, to the young and the old, to join the ranks of the insurgency... Let us, brother insurgents, go into the battle, not sparing our lives and blood for God, faith, and the fatherland, with a song on our lips, a rosary and a rifle in our hand; let us go as our ancestors went with scythes against the [Russian] cannon, knowing no fear. And let us not wait to anyone to lead us by the hand but with energy and enthusiasm let us aim and fire at the ugly head of the Communist!!! God and Fatherland! [emphasis added][218]

With the destruction of the underground by 1956 such sympathetic references to the Spanish Right disappeared almost completely from Poland's memory. Only in 1986 an underground publishing house,

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[218] *Biuletyn Informacyjny* 18/40, 18 September 1948, in Gronek, Marczak, and Olkuśnik, *Biuletyny 1948*, 166.

NOWA, issued a re-edition of the Piłsudskite war correspondent Roman Fajans' account of the Civil War in Spain.[219]

Meanwhile, Poland's adversaries of the Spanish Right enjoyed half a century of triumph and, thus, a monopoly on propaganda later camuflaged as scholarship. The "Spanish influence" on Polish Communism arrived early in 1942, when the NKVD sneaked into Poland from France and the Soviet Union several scores of veterans of the International Brigades to start a revolution disguised as a war for national liberation. This effort was nipped in the bud by a hostile reception by the ethnic Polish population in general and an armed counteraction of the independentist (anti-Communist) Polish underground in particular.[220] However, the Communist veterans of the Civil War in Spain who arrived in Poland with the Red Army in 1944 were to enjoy a period of power and influence, including roles in the secret police. Some of them were purged in the

[219] Roman Fajans, *Hiszpania 1936: Z wrażeń korespondenta wojennego* (Warszawa: NOWA, 1986).

[220] Some of those veterans of the war in Spain and NKVD agents were killed by the Nazis, for instance Józef Strzelczyk ("Jan Barwiński"). Others, like the Ukrainian Mołojec brothers, Bolesław ("Edward") and Zygmunt ("Anton"), were assassinated by their own comrades during the internecine struggle in the party. A few, for example Stefan Adryańczyk ("Bohun"), were shot by the Polish independentist (anti-Communist) underground. See Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, Piotr Gontarczyk, and Leszek Żebrowski, eds., *Tajne oblicze GL-AL i PPR: Dokumenty, 3 Volumes* (Warszawa: Burchard Edition, 1997-1999).

1950s. Many suffered in 1968 in the anti-Semitic campaign led by the Communist party.[221] Nonetheless, the Communist veterans of the Spanish Civil War continued to uphold the rigid Stalinist view of the Spanish Right. Perhaps the last published expression of that rigidity appeared in 1986. For nearly 50 years the members of the International Brigades enjoyed financial and other types of privilege that the puppet Communist parliament rubber-stamped for their benefit beginning in July 1945.[222]

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[221] In fact, when in October 1943 the NKVD formed a nucleus of the future Polish secret police troops, it appointed three Communist veterans of the war in Spain to head the unit: Captain José Puertas García, Major Leon Rubinstein, and Major Henryk Toruńczyk -- a Spaniard and two Polish Jews. After 1945, another Jewish Communist and a veteran of the International Brigades, Mendel Kossoj ("Kucyk") aka General Wacław Komar, became Poland's chief of the military intelligence. Some of his top cadres were his comrades from Spain. Many of these officers suffered persecution and even imprisonment in the early 1950s in the wake of the anti-Semitic purges in the Soviet Bloc. Then, a few were purged during a partial de-Stalinization in 1956. Later, many left Poland, especially in the wake of the anti-Semitic purge in the Communist party and government in 1968. Incidentally, during the purge many of the ethnic Polish Communists from the International Brigades attacked their Jewish comrades. See Eugeniusz Szyr, "O ostatnim dowódcy brygady im. J. Dąbrowskiego," *Z pola walki: Kwartalnik poświęcony dziejom ruchu robotniczego* [Warsaw] vol. 10, no. 1 (1967): 150 (131-158); George H. Hodos, *Show Trials: Stalinist Purges in Eastern Europe, 1948-1954* (New York, Westport CT, and London: Praeger, 1987), 135-154; Paweł Machcewicz, *Polski rok 1956* (Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza "Mówią wieki," 1993), 216-231; Andrzej Friszke, *Opozycja polityczna w PRL, 1945-1980* (London: Aneks, 1994), 67-267; Jerzy Eisler, *Marzec 1968: Geneza, przebieg, konsekwencje* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1991), *passim*.

[222] Jerzy Kochanowski, ed., *Protokoły posiedzeń Prezydium Krajowej Rady Narodowej, 1944-1947* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1995), 94, 130, 132, 220.

Free Poland

Only after 1989 did President Lech Wałesa and the Polish parliament vote to strip the Communist veterans of the Civil War in Spain of their benefits. Wałęsa argued that their struggle had nothing to do with the fight for Poland's independence. However, tellingly, after the return of the post-Communists to power in 1993, the parliament voted to restore privileges to the members of the International Brigades under the spurious pretext that they had defended "democracy". A segment of public opinion in Poland found that development deplorable in light of the involvement of many of these veterans in the high echelons of the Stalinist regime, including the apparatus of terror.[223] The return of freedom and independence to Poland meant not only the possibility of a democratic joust to strip privileges from Communist revolutionaries but also the return of the Spanish Right to the public discourse in all corners of the Polish public opinion.

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[223] Wiesław Górnicki, "Pod ścianę," *Polityka* [Warszawa], 5 January 1991, 14; Piotr Lipiński, "Dynamit i cześć," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 4-5 January 1997, 14-15.

Initially, in the early 1990s, a Spanish revival occurred among the young, undoubtedly because of the prior stigmatization of the Spanish Right by the Communists. In small part, the revival was also assisted by the appearance at the time in Poland of the conservative Catholic organization *Opus Dei,* which had been founded in Spain in 1928. Soon thereafter, Spanish issues moved to the realm of direct action. In March 1995, an altercation ensued between leftist and rightist students at the University of Warsaw because of an attempt to show an old French documentary about Franco's entry into Madrid in March 1939. Tellingly, the post-Communist university authorities sided with the anarchists who objected to the screening; the university bureaucrats banned the movie and threatened to expel the youthful organizer, alluding to his alleged pro-Nazi sympathies. A leftist Warsaw daily rejoiced that "Franco did not pass," and that "the students were disappointed, the anti-fascists happy."[224] Presumably, like in an old Comintern dichotomy, the students who wanted to watch a documentary were "fascists" and their opponents "anti-

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[224] (aże), "Franco nie przeszedł," *Gazeta Wyborcza: Dodatek Gazeta Stołeczna,* 25-26 March 1995, 3.

fascists". Sometime after, the "anti-fascist" periodical *Nigdy Więcej* (Never Anymore), which addresses Poland's anarchist, Trotskyite, and "alternative" youth culture, pledged to start an organization to commemorate the struggles of the International Brigades.[225]

Soon, however, an element of the struggle in Spain appeared on national TV, but in a context only the Spanish Right would endorse. In 1995 a small group of right-wing student activists infiltrated the Communist May Day parade, unfurling an anti-Communist banner: “Jaruzelski to jail.” Enraged, because the erstwhile dictator marched among them, the Communists attacked the young rightists. The latter extricated themselves from the mêlée and saved the banner. Thereafter, the anti-Communist students jeered their foes, chanting:

No pasarán!
Krzyczeli komuniści.
No pasarán!

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[225] See Związek Kombatantów RP i b. Więźniów Politycznych, "Uzasadnienie wniosku o powołanie Stowarzyszenia Przyjaciół Dąbrowszczaków oraz szkicowy zarys jego celów i zadań," *Nigdy Więcej* [Warsaw] 7 (Summer 1998): 8. In a manner eerily reminiscent of the Comintern practices, the *Nigdy Więcej* has recently exposed as "fascists" at least three of its erstwhile editors and collaborators, who broke with the periodical's "party line." This is a worrisome development considering that most of the people connected to the periodical are in their late teens and early twenties. See a tongue-in-cheek investigative expose by Michał Płomień, "'Nigdy Więcej!' na tropach 'Nigdy Więcej!'," *Fronda* 15/16 (1999): 327-329.

A jednak my przeszliśmy!

No pasarán!
The Communists had shouted.
No pasarán!
However, we did pass!

This chant was met with dumbfounded surprise both by the Communist demonstrators and the Polish TV audience.[226] Eventually, however, the symbolism of the war in Spain in general and the Spanish Right in particular penetrated to a broader audience. This new awareness of Spanish history was to a great extent brought about by the abolition of Communist censorship and the proliferation of independent publishing enterprises.

Of course, the resurgent Polish Right ignored most subtleties. A nationalist publisher issued a reprint of Giertych's *Heroic Spain* without any editorial commentary. An influential conservative-libertarian journalist, Stanisław Michalkiewicz, praised Franco on the pages of his Warsaw weekly, the *Najwyższy Czas!* (High Time). The periodical of the

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[226] Chodakiewicz, *Zagrabiona*, 102.

radical National Right group (*Prawica Narodowa*) published a laudatory article by Andrzej M. Tomczyk about "the nationalist takeover [*przewrót*] in Spain."[227] The Catholic conservative Grzegorz Kucharczyk argued that the Civil War in Spain was, in fact, "the second Spanish *Reconquista*."[228] Finally, in a misguided fit of historical revisionism, a youthful radical nationalist activist inexplicably called an anti-government and anti-Jewish student strike in the Fall of 1936 "the Alcázar at the University of Warsaw."[229]

At first, after 1989, the Left was rather shy about mentioning Spanish affairs. The Catholic liberals took pains to avoid the word "fascism," even when describing Franco and even the Falange. They endeavored to be as objective as possible. In fact, the most prominent students of Spain based their reassessments heavily on the eminent

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[227] Andrzej Tomczyk, "Przewrót narodowy w Hiszpanii," *Pod znakiem nacjonalizmu*, edited by Krzysztof Kawęcki and Rafał Mossakowski (Warszawa: Fulmen, 1994).

[228] Grzegorz Kucharczyk, "Generał odmitologizowany," *Ratio et Fides: Społeczeństwo, historia, kultura* [Łódź], 1 (Spring 1995): 64-68.

[229] Mariusz Bechta, "Alkazar na Uniwersytecie Warszawskim," *Reakcja: Tygodnik myśli* [Warszawa], 27 November 1997, 2. See also my letter to the editor, *Reakcja*, 15 January 1998, 4.

American historian Stanley G. Payne rather than the leftist British scholar Paul Preston.[230]

Later, however, the discourse on the Left changed markedly. Whereas the Right persisted in its unabashed championship of Catholic and Nationalist Spain, the Left for the most part reverted to age-worn Comintern stereotypes. Former Stalinists and Trotskyites, now turned liberals, led the charge. At the center of this controversy was my short history of the Spanish Civil War, *Expropriated Memory: The War in Spain, 1936-1939*, which depicted the Spanish conflict without regard to the customary boundaries of Communist and liberal orthodoxies. This work was violently attacked and fiercely defended not only on account of its challenge to reigning stereotypes but also because it was published by an influential conservative group of young Catholics, the *Fronda* (*Le Fronde* – Slingshot), named after the anti-absolutist rising of the French

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[230] See Lidia Mularska-Andziak, *Franco* (London: Puls Publications Ltd., 1994); Paweł Machcewicz, "Falanga: Program społeczny przed wybuchem wojny domowej i jego recepcja w Hiszpanii frankistowskiej," *Dzieje Najnowsze* vol 22, no. 1-2 (1990): 44-68.

aristocracy in the late 17th century.[231] Tellingly, left-wing pundits criticized General Franco and the “fascists” in Spain but they were strangely silent about the Carlists. On the other hand, conservative commentators were positively jubilant to have discovered a Spanish political orientation that holds dear Catholicism, tradition, and local rights and is untainted by any association with Nazism. Of course, practically no one on the Polish Right intends to copy Carlism for domestic purposes. However, Carlism has reentered the Polish scene as an important symbol of the conservative heritage of the common European past.[232]

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[231] The most important voices were: Tomasz Stańczyk, "Prostowanie Hemingwaya," *Rzeczpospolita: Plus-Minus* [Warszawa], 13-14 September 1997, 17; Jacek C. Kamiński, "Han pasado! -- 'Przeszliśmy!'," *Myśl Polska*, 5 October 1997, *Dodatek Myśl Polska z książką* 10 (October 1997): II; Paweł Skibiński, "Nie tylko o wojnie domowej," *Nowe Państwo*, 10 October 1997, 9; Paweł Machcewicz, "Wojna hiszpańska trwa," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 26 November 1997, 21; Andrzej Rafał Potocki, "Mit obalony," *Życie* [Warszawa], 27 November 1997, 5; Stefan Niesiołowski, "Rachunek zbrodni," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 16 January 1998, 14-15; Krzysztof Wolicki, "Bez dialogu," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 17-18 January 1998, 18, 20; Jerzy Lubach, "Kłamstwom lewicy -- No pasarán!" *Gazeta Polska*, 21 January 1998, 11; Michał Kietlicz, "Wiedzieli o gułagu. Poparli komunistów," *Życie*, 28 January 1998, 10; Anatol Arciuch, "Poprawiacze historii," *Nowe Państwo*, 6 February 1998, 24; Monika Rotulska, "Kościół -- wróg numer 1 rewolucyjnej Hiszpanii," *Nasz Dziennik*, 15 April 1998, 8; Tomasz Zbigniew Zapert, "Przywracanie pamięci," *Życie*, 15 June 1998, 10; L.R. Jasieńczyk Krajewski, "O wigilii katastrofy," *Nowy Przegląd Wszechpolski* [Lublin], vol. 5, no. 3-4 (1998): 6; Tomasz Burek, "Prawda wyglądała inaczej," *Gazeta Polska*, 17 March 1999, 18.

[232] Probably only the tiny group of monarchists publishing in *Pro Fide, Rege et Lege* would not mind importing Carlism to Poland. See Jacek Bartyzel, *„Umierać, ale powoli!” O monarchistycznej i katolickiej kontrrewolucji w krajach romańskich, 1815-2000* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Arcana, 2002).

Conclusion

Poland's reaction to the Spanish Right was conditioned to a great extent by domestic politics, history, and national security. The reaction of the Polish Right and the non-Communist Left was ultimately determined by Polish hostility towards Germany and Russia. However, the reactions of the various political groups towards the Spanish Right depended on their ideological affinities and the strength of their Catholic faith.

To express their preferences, Polish society in general and the informed elites in particular concentrated on similarities and differences between Spain and Poland. The Polish parties that found the Spanish Right agreeable stressed the ideals embraced by the Nationalist coalition. Conversely, the groups in Poland that regarded the Spanish Right unfavorably criticized its ideology as antithetical to their own. This was no systematic scholarship but a reaction: to be “for” or “against.” Intelectually, Polish academia failed to process the topic in a dispassionate

manner because it lacked the time: the Second World War broke out in September 1939, barely five months after the conclusion of the civil war in Spain. Later, the Nazi occupation rendered Spanish affairs mute for all purposes. Afterward, until recently, Communist censorship in Poland hindered serious intellectual inquiries to understand the Spanish Right on its own terms. As a consequence, rather than an intellectual construct, the image of the Spanish Right functioned largely as a set of symbols (related or pseudo-related to the analogous symbols that the Poles considered as their own). Therefore these Rightist ideals were understood and expressed in terms of outward appearances, heroic deeds, and the Catholic faith. In the process, concepts unique to the situation in Poland were projected onto developments in Spain.[233]

Between 1936 and 1939, the Polish Right sought out in Spain those groups that had apparently similar ideological profiles. The national radicals flirted with the symbolism of the Falange, while largely ignoring

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[233] A similar process took place with catastrophic results regarding other aspects of Poland's history and her intellectual development. See Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, "Poland's *Fragebogen*: Collective Stereotypes, Individual Recollections," in *Poland's Transformation: A Work in Progress*, ed. by Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, John Radzilowski, and Dariusz Tolczyk (Charlottesville, VA: Leopolis Press, 2003), 223-67.

its ideology. The National Democrats supported the Carlists, while conservatives and monarchists backed anybody willing to defeat the Communists. The Piłsudskites extolled the Spanish army. The support of most of the Polish Right for its Spanish counterpart expressed itself in propaganda, charity, and fundraising. However, it was the Polish government that involved itself with Spain most vigorously. The *Sanacja* regime preferred the Nationalist coalition in Spain, but pragmatism forced the Piłsudskites to deal with the Republican side.

The reaction of Poland's Left to the Spanish Right was one of revulsion towards the ideological counterparts of the Left's Polish enemies. Thus, home-grown socialists and populists largely acted out their own animosity towards their adversaries in Spain. However, Poland's liberals, split between the Catholic majority and the atheist minority, were partly influenced by the Comintern and the domestic Communists, who endeavored vigorously to infiltrate and influence the Left in Poland.

After 50 years of Stalinist censorship, the pre-war divisions have reemerged anew in Poland. Again, ideological analogies and domestic

politics dictate the logic of Polish affinity and revulsion towards the Spanish Right.[234]

Marek Jan Chodakiewicz

[234] For an excellent recent overview of Poland's attitude toward Spain see Jan Kieniewicz, *Hiszpania w zwierciadle polskim* (Gdańsk: Novus Orbis, 2001).