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Jewish-Ukrainian Relations in Inter-War Poland as Reflected in Some Ukrainian Publications

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[–] Abstract and Keywords

This chapter surveys Jewish-Ukrainian relations in inter-war Poland as reflected in some Ukrainian publications. The historiography of Jewish-Ukrainian relations, although quite extensive, has usually tended towards partisanship, caused by the uneasy, and at times tragic, relations between Ukrainians and Jews. To provide an understanding of Ukrainian attitudes towards Jews between the two world wars, the chapter examines the perceptions and images of the Jews in the Ukrainian press in Poland in the inter-war years. The Ukrainian press reflects traditional Ukrainian attitudes towards Jews as well as some images formed specifically during the period under discussion. It also helps one understand how Ukrainians felt towards Jews during the war years in the face of the Holocaust. Since Ukrainians and Jews formed the two largest national minorities in inter-war Poland, their interrelations reflected issues relating to Poles and the Polish state as well. Moreover, Ukrainian-Jewish relations were influenced by problems relating to Poland's most significant neighbours, Soviet Russia in the east and Weimar and later Nazi Germany in the west. Thus, an examination of the Ukrainian press in Poland also throws light on broader ideological and political issues.

Keywords: Jewish-Ukrainian relations, inter-war Poland, Ukrainian publications, Ukrainians, Jews, Ukrainian press, Holocaust, Poles, Polish state

THE historiography of Ukrainian-Jewish relations, although quite extensive, has usually tended towards partisanship, caused by the uneasy, and at times tragic, relations between Ukrainians and Jews.¹ Massive monographic research remains to be done in order to provide an accurate assessment of particular periods and geographical areas. The purpose of this study is the examination of a specific issue, which could perhaps assist us in the understanding of Ukrainian attitudes towards Jews between the two world wars: the perceptions and images of the Jews in the Ukrainian press in Poland in the inter-war years. The Ukrainian press reflects traditional Ukrainian attitudes towards Jews as well as some images formed specifically during the period under discussion. It also helps us understand how Ukrainians felt towards Jews during the war

years in the face of the Holocaust. Since Ukrainians and Jews formed the two largest national minorities in inter-war Poland, their interrelations reflected issues relating to Poles and the Polish state as well. Moreover, Ukrainian–Jewish relations were influenced by problems relating to Poland’s most significant neighbours, Soviet Russia in the east and Weimar and later Nazi Germany in the west. Thus, an examination of the Ukrainian press in Poland also throws light on broader ideological and political issues.

Before discussing the Ukrainian press, a concise presentation of the Ukrainian political scene in Poland is in order.² The largest and most influential movement was the Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance (UNDO), which occupied the centre of the Ukrainian political spectrum. It was committed to constitutional **(p.233)** democracy and Ukrainian independence. The main representative of socialist tendencies was the Radical Party. Communism was represented by the Communist Party of Western Ukraine (KPZU). Since for prolonged periods it was illegal, the KPZU used a front organization, the Sel-Rob, the Ukrainian Workers’–Peasants’ Socialist Union. The 1930s witnessed a drastic decline of democratic and moderate forces and a parallel rise of nationalist, rightist-radical elements. Their leading political structure was the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). It drew its support mainly from the politically frustrated and fiercely nationalistic Ukrainian youth, affected by the impressive model of Nazi Germany, with whose anti-communism, anti-Russianism, and anti-Polishness they could identify, for their own specific reasons.

This study does not claim to present an all-inclusive quantitative analysis of the Ukrainian press in inter-war Poland; however, it does cover some of the most representative political and cultural Ukrainian publications.³ *Dilo* (‘The Deed’), used extensively in this study, although it opened its pages to various views and standpoints, was essentially linked to the UNDO. It played an important role in the life of the Ukrainian community in inter-war Poland. Around 1930 it was published in a print-run of 4,600 copies. The weekly *Hromads’kyi holos* (‘Community Voice’) was the organ of the Ukrainian Socialist Radical Party. *Novii chas* (‘New Time’), basically non-partisan, became the most widely read Ukrainian daily in Galicia. In 1938 it had a circulation of 16,000. *Ukrains’ki visty* (‘Ukrainian News’) represented the moderate Front of National Unity, as did the weekly *Bat’kivshchyna* (‘Fatherland’). *Vistnyk* (‘Herald’), a monthly journal of politics, literature, culture, scholarship, and community affairs, under the editorship and forceful leadership of Dmytro Dontsov, preached the ideology of Ukrainian integral nationalism, which contained elements of fascism. It became one of the most influential Ukrainian journals in the 1930s, especially among the educated youth. It had 1,500 subscribers. An example of the most extreme nationalist-minded publication geared to a lowbrow Ukrainian readership was the pro-OUN monthly *Frontom* (‘Forward’). The actual readership of the Ukrainian press in Poland was rather modest, compared with that of the other major national minorities. According to one estimate the circulation ratio of Ukrainian dailies among the literate Ukrainian population was 1:5,000; of newspapers published two or three times a week 1:2,000; and that of weeklies, 3:1,000.⁴ The Ukrainian press, unlike any other minority press in Poland, was plagued by official **(p.234)** repression in the form of severe censorship, imposition of fines, and confiscations of entire print-runs.

The overall impression based on examination of the Ukrainian publications surveyed for this study indicates that Jewish-related issues were not regularly discussed; they surfaced mostly around specific events. One of the often-repeated themes was that of Jewish–Polish co-operation. Thus, for example, an editorial published in *Dilo* in September 1922 stated that ‘Jews in the whole world support the powerful. Jews on Ukrainian lands continuously served the enemies of

the Ukrainian people.' It accused the Jews of acting as Russifiers and Polonizers in the past and of being used as 'weapons [in the hands] of every oppressor of the Ukrainian nation'.⁵ At the same time the article spoke of the 'new Jew', the 'man of the national renaissance'. It concluded that Ukrainian-Jewish co-operation would be possible only if the Jews opposed alien (i.e. Polish) influences.

The Steiger affair, in which a Jewish youth was falsely accused of planning the assassination of the Polish president Stanisław Wojciechowski and which extended from September 1924 to the final verdict in December of the following year, aroused some responses in the Ukrainian press. The Ukrainian testimony and information about the would-be assassin, the Ukrainian Teofil Olszanski, which could have facilitated acquittal of the accused Jewish law student, was not forthcoming in a clear-cut way. *Dilo* reported the initial stage of the trial without taking sides, mildly reprimanding Steiger's defence for its anti-Ukrainian insinuations about the possible perpetrators. It also pointed out the uses made of the trial by the Polish antisemitic press.⁶ When the trial resumed in the fall of 1925 *Dilo* was highly critical of the Jewish and Zionist-supported defence, and the defence counsel, Dr Michael Ryngel, in particular, a Zionist and a member of the Polish senate was reprimanded for attacking Ukrainian nationalists and accusing them of collaboration with German *Hakenkreuzlers* (Nazis). Such accusations were intended, according to *Dilo*, to besmirch the whole Ukrainian community. A new union of (pro-Polish) Jewish assimilationists was formed, not so much in defence of Steiger as against the Ukrainians.⁷ In October 1925 Olszanski, the young Ukrainian who on the orders of the Ukrainian Military Organization had tried to assassinate the Polish president, admitted all the details when he was questioned in Berlin. *Dilo's* reaction was twofold: not only did it criticize the Ukrainian Military Organization for instigating the accusations against an innocent man, but it also continued to attack 'Jewish circles' that 'assumed the role of prosecutors against our [Ukrainian] community'. What particularly incensed the Ukrainians was that Jewish politicians and Jewish public opinion did their utmost to show loyalty to the Poles and throw blame onto the Ukrainians. Closing its comments on the affair, *Dilo* stated, 'With typical energy, racial obstinacy, and **(p.235)** heedlessness, this affair was turned into the most important issue of Europe and of the Polish Republic.'⁸

A major issue of the 1920s was the *ugoda* ('compromise' or 'agreement') of 1925 between the Polish administration and the Jewish Club (Kolo) in the Sejm. In this agreement the Jewish side promised to support certain Polish interests and policies, and the Polish government agreed to a number of concessions to the Jewish minority in Poland.⁹ As early as the fall of 1924 *Dilo* wrote about 'a secret game [bringing] together two extremes: Polish antisemites and Jewish nationalists'. The paper particularly attacked the role in creating the agreement of Leon Reich, the Galician Jewish member and chairman of the Jewish Club in the Polish Sejm. *Dilo* vehemently accused the east Galician Jewish political leaders of Polonizing tendencies, alluding to the servile nature of the Jews and their propensity to identify openly with the powerful, i.e. the Poles.¹⁰

Nevertheless, an analysis of Jewish attitudes published in *Dilo* in early 1925 differentiated among the various political groupings of Polish Jewry. Singling out the east Galician Zionist politicians as immoral opportunists, whose treacherous behaviour towards the majority population in the area (the Ukrainians) was detrimental to mutual understanding, the article pointed out that at the very same time, Jews in Soviet Ukraine were embarking on a policy of co-operation with the Ukrainians and were abandoning their former Russian sympathies.¹¹ Ukrainian reactions to the Polish-Jewish *rapprochement* reached a peak in the summer of 1925. *Dilo* recorded in late June: 'This alliance of exceptionally sensitive semites with extremely ardent

antisemites shows the final result of a moral and ethical collapse. It constitutes also the collapse of the Zionist idea, the liquidation of a separate Jewish nation with its ideals and ideological aspirations.¹² *Novii chas*, stated in this context: ‘Already in the period of historical Poland, Jews were bloodsuckers who constituted a greater disaster to the Ukrainian people, even more so than the Polish *szlachta* [nobility].’ Such epithets as ‘denouncers’, ‘usurers’, and ‘parasites’ were also used in the article. *Dilo* and other Ukrainian newspapers criticized time and again the Jews’ lack of solidarity with the Ukrainians and other national minorities against the Polish majority. The prevailing implication was that of Jewish perfidy and treachery.

Derogatory adjectives were freely bandied about and used in a general manner. **(p.236)** The *Hromads’kyi holos* attacked particularly the ‘Jewish Zionist’.¹³ It is not only the substance of the Ukrainian comments that is significant, it is also the tone. A recurring theme in descriptions of Jews and their behaviour was that of ‘deal’ and ‘dealer’, in the original Ukrainianized Yiddish *gesheft* and *geshefiar*.¹⁴ These and similar expressions were intended to convey to the Ukrainian reader a negative perception of Jews. In a long concluding article on the 1925 Polish–Jewish compromise, *Dilo* repeated its former accusations, indirectly referring to Ukrainian perceptions of the Ukrainian Jewish past: ‘a thick layer of injuries and wounds deceitfully inflicted by “Polish” and “Little Polish” Jews affected the collective organism of the Ukrainian people’. Jews were depicted in the article as people who historically had lived off the wealth of the Ukrainians and who were urged now to accommodate to the majority—the Ukrainians—among and by whom they exist.¹⁵

Another highly visible issue in the Ukrainian press in the 1920s was the assassination of Simon Petliura and the subsequent trial of Shalom Schwartzbard. Diametrically opposed opinions on the matter have been voiced by Ukrainian and Jewish historians.¹⁶ What is relevant for our discussion, however, is not so much the historical truth (which is of course highly significant *per se*) as the images and symbols generated by the events. A leading scholar of Ukrainian nationalism stated that, following his assassination, ‘Petliura underwent an immediate transformation ... to a national martyr and hero’, and his death ‘was assigned mystical overtones’.¹⁷ It is in this light that Ukrainian reactions to the death of Petliura and the subsequent acquittal of Schwartzbard should be examined. A few days after the assassination, *Dilo*, in its biographical account of Petliura, claimed that the origins of the assassination should be sought in ‘Russian Jewish circles’.¹⁸ A front-page article entitled ‘The Abominable Myth’ launched an all-out attack on the stand of the Jewish press, stating ‘the criminal’s [i.e. Schwartzbard’s] racial origin [caused] the whole Jewish and Judophile press to turn into sewers of stinking manure, which attempt to overflow and drown the public opinion of the cultural world ... the rich imagination of the eastern race paints images of soul-chilling barbarities at the expense of the Ukrainian nation, which for whole centuries has been carrying on its back almost a third of world Jewry’.

As in similar, earlier instances, contemporary Ukrainian reactions and emotions **(p.237)** were imprinted on images of an unfortunate historical relationship. A significant phenomenon influencing the Ukrainian–Jewish interaction is the fact that certain momentous events and personalities of the past were perceived in a diametrically opposed way by members of the respective communities. Thus, the *Dilo* article considered it outrageous for the Jews to besmirch a ‘heroic period’ in the history of the Ukrainians (Petliura’s attempts at national independence). It went on to deny ‘the obnoxious myth’ of Ukrainian anti-Jewish pogroms and protested against Jewish accusations of Ukrainian collective guilt for ‘merely a thousand or two Jewish victims’ during the civil war period. Jews were again referred to as Russian and Polish patriots and

carriers of the oppressors' cultures. They were accused of joining the enemies of Ukrainian independence and assisting the Bolsheviks in their murder of Ukrainians. The article attacked 'world Jewry' and Jewish press pogroms directed against innocent Ukrainians. The following quotation is perhaps typical of the writer's anti-Jewish sentiments: 'This [Jewish anti-Petliura accusation] is the expression of loud and outrageous sadism, unrestrained malice, and primordial fury coming from those who are both universal masters and universal slaves, but, above all, slaves of their own unbridled passion.'¹⁹

The editors claimed that *Dilo* received numerous letters from its readers in Poland, as well as from Ukrainian *émigré* centres abroad, identifying with its stand on the Petliura affair. The assassination and the subsequent outburst of anti-Jewish emotions in the Ukrainian press had a unifying effect on otherwise contentious and even mutually hostile sectors of the Ukrainian public.²⁰ *Hromads'kyi holos*, however, did not share this general nationalist consensus. In an article called 'Against Black-Hundredism', it condemned both Jewish and Ukrainian newspapers for inflaming Ukrainian–Jewish relations. In its criticism it singled out such Ukrainian publications as *Novii chas* and the religious *Nova zoria*, which drew a parallel between the Jewish act of murder against Petliura and the killing of Christ. In the spirit of its socialist class approach, *Hromads'kyi holos* appealed to its readers: 'The Ukrainian working people should clearly dissociate themselves from this type of Black Hundred pogrom war-cry.'²¹

The Petliura–Schwartzbard issue reappeared in the Ukrainian press in conjunction with Schwartzbard's trial in October 1927, when he was set free. The assassination and trial had a strong impact on Ukrainian–Jewish relations, and the arguments and editorials again took on a historical perspective centring on Ukrainian–Jewish relations past and present. Jews were accused of hostile attitudes towards the Ukrainian struggle for independence, and the Jewish press was singled out for its extreme anti-Ukrainian stand: 'The sword's edge directed at **(p. 238)** the back of the Ukrainian people flashes from every line of the Jewish press, from every announcement of Jewish leaders.'²² Jewish propaganda, the Jewish financial establishment, and the Jewish 'international' with assistance from French intellectuals were accused of attacking 'bloodied Ukraine'. A previously expressed grudge was repeated, and it was claimed that 'All Jews unfortunately were and are in the camp of the powerful ... in the camp of the enemies of Ukrainian statehood, Ukrainian culture, in the camp of the exploiters, all [Jews] were agents of alien powers, representatives of foreign interests.'²³

In an editorial published after the verdict, *Dilo* discussed the trial's impact on future Ukrainian–Jewish relations and concluded that the Jews' behaviour had inflicted an irreparable blow to mutual understanding. It also pointed out that a tiny Jewish minority existed in the midst of an enormous Ukrainian majority, and a widening abyss had been created between them—the Jews should understand that they lived on Ukrainian national territory.²⁴ A much more moderate editorial by Dr Dmytro Levits'kii, president of UNDO, the main Ukrainian political party in the area, followed a few days later. Levits'kii admitted that Jews had suffered on Ukrainian lands, and attributed this to certain elements within the Ukrainian population and leadership. He ended his statement in a conciliatory tone, hoping for a better future between the two nations and pointing out the need for co-operation and friendship.²⁵

A prevailing Jewish-related issue in the Ukrainian press of the 1930s was that of economic tension between Ukrainians and Jews in eastern Galicia. Ukrainian policies and appeals aimed at attaining maximum economic co-operation among the Ukrainian population of the region, which caused increased competition with Jewish shopkeepers and tavern-owners in the Ukrainian

countryside and in the small towns. There were also attempts to squeeze out the few Jewish farmers. A considerable growth of the Ukrainian co-operative movement in various branches of production and commerce was accompanied by public propaganda under the slogan ‘Each to his own’, and in some cases by acts of anti-Jewish violence. The London weekly *Jewish Chronicle* published several reports by its correspondent in Poland, Joel Cang, under the headline ‘Ukrainian Terrorism’. They dealt with the various instances and forms of anti-Jewish incidents throughout eastern Galicia, and spoke of an ‘anti-Jewish inferno’.²⁶ These articles were subsequently reprinted (p.239) in other newspapers. Both *Dilo* and *Novii chas* vigorously condemned what they considered an all-out anti-Ukrainian campaign. *Dilo* spoke of the clearly economic nature of Ukrainian–Jewish tensions and of the ‘anomaly of Jewish economic supremacy on Ukrainian ethnic territory’. It complained not only of a Jewish monopoly of tavern ownership, but also of the fact that Jews impose upon the (mostly Ukrainian) towns a Jewish architectural and national character.²⁷

As for violent attacks on Jews, the newspaper maintained that these were isolated cases emanating from neo-nationalist youth, criticized by UNDO and *Dilo*. It stressed that ‘the whole Ukrainian organized community stands outside these deeds and assumes a clearly negative attitude towards them’: repeated Jewish claims that all Ukrainians were antisemites might actually turn them into such.²⁸ In a subsequent announcement and article on the issue, the UNDO leadership and *Dilo* strongly criticized the Jewish press campaign, and particularly the articles published in the *Jewish Chronicle*. The newspaper again voiced its dissatisfaction with Jewish attitudes towards Ukrainians. It also mentioned that numerous readers’ letters complained about Jewish identification with Polish rather than with Ukrainian interests.²⁹ *Novii chas*, too, criticized the *Jewish Chronicle* and its correspondent in Poland for spreading false accusations and initiating an anti-Ukrainian campaign. Its primary cause, according to *Novii chas*, was to raise concern for Polish Jewry among Jews abroad. If an anti-Jewish campaign existed at all, it was rather that of the Polish nationalists, the Endecja (National Democrats).³⁰

Increasing anti-Jewish attitudes among Poles and anti-Jewish legislation in Poland in the second half of the 1930s were also reflected in the Ukrainian press. *Dilo* warned against premature rejoicing and hopes among certain sectors of the Ukrainian population and argued that ‘Ukrainians will nowhere replace the Jews ... [there will] come a time when professions and places of work will be closed to Ukrainians.’ Ukrainians and Jews shared a similar status—that of a stateless nation.³¹ A subsequent headline simply warned ‘After the Jews—Our Turn’. It (p.240) also mentioned that it was the Ukrainian and not the Polish clergy who warned against anti-Jewish outbursts.³² *Dilo*, not without a certain note of *schadenfreude*, commented that nothing remained of the 1925 Polish–Jewish agreement.³³ It also stated, however, that the Ukrainians would not align themselves with the Poles on the basis of antisemitism, and called for consolidation of the Jewish and Ukrainian communities in Poland.³⁴

Towards the close of the 1930s there was a marked decrease in the scope and impact of the Ukrainian leftist and moderate publications and a growing influence of the radical right, extreme nationalist press. These trends were at least partially affected by the Soviet regime’s contemporary Ukrainian policies as well as by growing authoritarian, fascist, and Nazi proclivities in Europe.³⁵ The continually increasing anti-Soviet and pro-Nazi sentiments, particularly among young Ukrainians exerted a cumulative impact on Ukrainian attitudes towards Jews and were reflected in Ukrainian publications. This was evident in *Vistnyk*, the most outstanding Ukrainian ideological and literary publication in eastern Galicia, published in Lwów under the editorship of Dmytro Dontsov. A biographer of Dontsov wrote that he and his paper

'played a great and important role in the formation of Ukrainian thought in all Ukrainian lands in the inter-war period'. It had a considerable readership, especially among students and the liberal professions, and could be considered the most influential monthly publication among Ukrainian intellectuals.³⁶ During the inter-war years, Dontsov moved clearly in the direction of élitism, fascism, and extreme nationalism. He had an enormous influence on the young generation and to a large extent dominated Ukrainian political thought. His radicalization was partly caused by the Petliura affair, and his stand against the Jews became a component of his overall world-view.³⁷ Thus, in 1926 Dontsov wrote, 'the Jews are guilty, terribly guilty, as those who helped to consolidate Russian rule in the Ukraine'. Regarding Jewish accusations against Ukrainian anti-Jewish pogroms, he caustically remarked, 'What are the hyenas concerned about? About pogroms ... What pogroms? There were no pogroms in the Ukraine. There was a civil war.'³⁸

It is difficult to decide whether the Jewish issue was central in Dontsov's ideology, although it did reappear in almost every one of his articles in *Vistnyk* (p.241) throughout the 1930s. Whether he was writing about the United Front of antifascist forces, France, or, especially, Soviet Russia, he never failed to mention the Jews. A typical way of referring to them was by mentioning Jewish names, always in a derogatory way. Thus, commenting in 1934 on the tactics of the United Front, he wrote, 'The French socialist party and the Russian social democrats [the Mensheviks], that is, the Blums and the Abramoviches, founded a united front with the Moscow gangsters.' He also spoke in this context of 'the joyous shrieks raised by the Masonic-Jewish press jazz band in honour of the United Front and the Kremlin'. Those who supported this political line, he claimed, were 'foreigners ... who dared to dictate their social, political, and cultural credo'—such as 'Trotsky, Béla Kun, [Tibor] Szamuely, [Kurt] Eisner', and he listed the 'trigger-happy heroes of the present: the Radeks, Kaganoviches, Berias, and Tsederbaums'.³⁹ Writing in 1936 under the pseudonym 'Sganarel', he commented bitterly on the murder of a Nazi official in Switzerland by David Frankfurter, a Jewish student. Dontsov attacked the Jews as a group and wrote: 'We do know that the wish of Israel was always to undermine the traditions of other people.' Discussing Jewish influences in England and Switzerland, he concluded: 'The international vermin have not yet succeeded in eating into the new Rome [England] ... The Frankfurters have also not succeeded in turning Switzerland into a departure point for their dark intrigues ... The Goliaths are no longer as stupid as they were in the past.'⁴⁰

While Dontsov and *Vistnyk* discussed Jewish attempts to influence various states and societies, the criticisms centred particularly on the Judaeo-Bolshevik connection, usually presented as a sinister plot against humanity, and especially against the Ukrainian people. Dontsov's tactic was to repeat the names of Jewish members of the Soviet élite and identify them as 'traditional' Jews. Thus, for example, Soviet foreign minister Maxim Litvinov became 'the *émigré* from the Bilostok ghetto-Litvinov-Valakh', and Karl Radek, 'Radek-Sobel'zon [of Tarnów]'.⁴¹

He often spoke of the three ominous 'internationals', the social democrats, the communists, and the Jews, the enemies of Ukrainian nationalism. In an article published in 1934 Dontsov wrote:

First of all we have to make sure that the Ukraine will not become the domain of international socialism. The Ukraine of international proletarian solidarity is a Ukraine of the 'International *canaille*', a Ukraine of the Schwartzbards, Pinkhas Krasnys, and Blums. (p.242) The Ukrainian élite should not be Jewish, in its midst ... should not be members of a people (or sect) that receives directives ... from international Jewry, which actively supported Bolshevism and the expropriation of our peasants for the benefit of their race.⁴²

Although it is likely that he was influenced by fascist and Nazi attitudes towards Jews, Dontsov's hatred of the Jews, unlike Hitler's obsession with Judaeo-Bolshevism, was secondary to his hatred of the Bolsheviks. In the mid-1920s he wrote: "The Jews are guilty, terribly guilty as those who helped to consolidate Russian rule in the Ukraine, but "the Jew is not guilty of everything". Russian imperialism is guilty of everything."⁴³

In 1938 a *Vistnyk* article elaborated on this theme:

Naïve antisemites, who believe in 'a handful of Jewish usurpers who rule the whole Russian people', who stubbornly analyse Bolshevism by the means of *reductio ad judaicum*, cannot comprehend that 'the Jew' ... constitutes an effect and not a cause; that he is a parasitical phenomenon of a secondary nature ... Israel surfaces only there where an appropriate climate exists ... where the communal structure is affected, where the national and human uniqueness is maimed ... [where] general demoralization and racial decay set in ... the Babylonian state structure of the 'Russian' type constitutes the perfect paradise for Israel, and that is why world Jewry considers the USSR as its most ideal modification of Russia ...

The article anticipated a fast-approaching end to the power of this a-national conglomerate of Soviet Russia and its adherents.⁴⁴

The Soviet purges and trials of the late 1930s resulted in numerous anti-Jewish comments in the Ukrainian press. *Novii chas* referred to Yan Gamarnik (the prominent Soviet military leader who committed suicide in May 1937, during the purges, to avoid arrest and trial) as 'the Odessa Jew-boy Yankel Gamarnik, the cruel appeaser of the Ukraine in 1918-1925', and to the Soviet general Yona Yakir (who was arrested in 1937 and executed), as 'shmontses [Jew-clown] Ioina Iakir'.⁴⁵ One article announced: 'Béla Kun, actually an assumed name of Cohen, a Hungarian Jew-boy, communist ... a degenerate in appearance, a very talented demagogue and conspirator. Sadist.' The newspaper accused him of persecuting and transporting Ukrainians from the Crimean peninsula and thus facilitating Jewish settlement, assisted by Jewish millionaires from America. The newspaper's comment on his execution by the Soviets was: 'A dog's death for a dog'.⁴⁶

Dilo attempted to present a different approach to its readers about the involvement of Jews in the Soviet regime. Commenting in 1938 on the deteriorating situation of European Jewry, it stated:

(p.243) there is no special ill-will towards Jews in the Ukrainian community ... we cannot blame the Polish Jews for the fact that their brethren in Bolshevia under the leadership of Lazar Kaganovich enslave the trans-Dnieper Ukrainian people ... since Jewish nationals in Poland cannot influence their co-religionists in the USSR ... We do not lump together the legal Jewish organizations [in Poland] with the [Jewish] youngsters of the KPZU [the Communist Party of Western Ukraine], and we are convinced that national Jewry is ideologically hostile to these youngsters.⁴⁷

What was Dontsov's and *Vistnyk*'s attitude to Hitler and Nazi ideology? Dontsov was clearly a staunch supporter of integral nationalism propagated by the fascist ideologues in inter-war Europe. He called for national activism, stressed the importance of the national will, and admired the strong men. At the same time he did not propose a well-structured philosophical approach, and his world-view was a collection of comments on issues and problems that seemed

significant to him at the time they occurred. In his writings we do not find a clear-cut identification with Hitler or Nazism, although his overall attitude seems to be in favour. In the late 1930s Dontsov often criticized Jewish influence on states and political leaders that tried to contain Hitler. Thus, *Vistnyk* accused the United States and France of identifying with the Jewish anti-German stand, as if 'they were the sons of Israel'. It used one of Dontsov's traditional tactics, to mention names: 'Eddy Cantor, Miss Dorothy Thompson, the Marx brothers, Charlie Chaplin—all started a march against the Nazi barbarians.' The article spoke of '120 million Aryans over the ocean, under the yoke of Israel' and of the tremendous power of 'Jewish suggestion'. Commenting on anti-German criticism, *Vistnyk* always juxtaposed the few killings in Nazi Germany to the mass murders in Soviet Russia.⁴⁸

In an extensive article entitled 'The Riddle of the Third Reich', published a few months before the war, Dontsov seemed to accept Hitler's analysis of the Jewish role in world affairs. He fully agreed with him that three elements were responsible for the morbidity of Germany's national organism: the Weimar bourgeoisie, social democracy, and international Jewry, 'which locust-like fell upon the vanquished land ... to exploit it ... and poison it with the spirit of pornography, hedonism ... "pure art" and simply, by the spirit of "Bolshevism"'. Dontsov concurred with Hitler and Rosenberg that German democracy and socialism were highly influenced, or indeed actually formed, by Jews, who used them for their own selfish interests. 'After seizing the press, the theatre, art, and film, they castrated the spirit of the German people.' Such Jews as the Adlers, Liebknights (*sic*), and Feuchtwangers were citizens of the world and high priests of Israel who had infected the German press and literature with their internationalism and cosmopolitanism to the detriment of Germany. Dontsov expressed his admiration for **(p.244)** Hitler and his élite group of political supporters, who by their sheer willpower succeeded 'to return their lost faith to the German people'. All this was achieved in spite of 'Israel's millions of dollars', and 'Israel had to bow its neck' before the new German faith and power. The ultimate solution to the secret of Hitler's Third Reich was, according to Dontsov, the heroic spirit, the willpower and sense of mission of a small group of people. Referring to the 'Ukrainian situation', Dontsov concluded that 'the ultimate right in history is with those nations that are able to bring forth such a group'.⁴⁹

Even the moderate nationalist *Ukrains'ki visti* presented a very unfavourable image of the Jews in the late 1930s, as evidenced in its reporting on Jewish issues and events, as well as in stories and *feuilletons*. The newspaper seemed sympathetic to the increasingly extreme anti-Jewish policies in Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Romania and the refusal of other states to assist the Jews in their plight. Jews were depicted as exploiters of the Ukrainians and despicable pro-Bolshevik troublemakers.⁵⁰ Its anti-Jewish tone seemed to grow particularly in 1938-9. This was partially linked to the short-lived but ideologically and emotionally significant episode of Ukrainian autonomy in the sub-Carpathian region. The creation of a Ukrainian government in Transcarpathia had a great impact on the Ukrainians in Poland and was considered as a first step towards an independent Ukraine. One writer spoke of local Jews as 'bleary-eyed little Jewesses', 'little Jew-boys', and 'side-curved fathers' living amongst dirt and disease.⁵¹ Such a description presented the Ukrainian reader with a tangible example of what the highbrow *Vistnyk* described in a more sophisticated political-ideological way. The Jews of Carpatho-Ukraine, as well as the Jewish press elsewhere, were described as enemies of Ukrainian national independence and supporters of Hungarization and Czechization of the region. They were often referred to in the most derogatory language, as 'Jew-boys'.⁵² Another article discussed 'How the Jews Pauperized Carpatho-Ukraine'.⁵³

As far as Nazi Germany and its anti-Jewish policies and actions were concerned, the middle-of-the-road *Dilo* spoke with two voices. In 1936 it published Uniate Bishop Ivan Buchko's exhortation against antisemitism and his condemnation of Hitler's neo-paganism and book-burning. Buchko supported the mild anti-Nazi stand of German cardinal Michael Faulhaber and Austrian cardinal Theodor Innitzer.⁵⁴ Two years later, however, *Dilo* spoke of the 'favourable (p. 245) attitude of the Third Reich and its Führer to the Ukrainian problem' and condemned the characterization of UNDO as Germanophobe, 'like the Polish Endeks or Jewish Hitlerophobes'. It went on to state, 'we do not belong to the anti-German Endeko-Jewish front'. It praised Germany for its interest in the Ukrainians and its complete hostility to Soviet Russia and further recommended that its readers above all consider the national interest of Ukrainians. The article even looked forward to a future war, 'since any war in eastern Europe must actively bring to the fore the Ukrainian problem'.⁵⁵

If *Dilo* was a respectable, 'moderate' publication and *Vistnyk* a political-ideological nationalist journal, the pro-OUN *Frontom* was an example of the crudest kind of misrepresentation among Ukrainians, putting forward the most vicious and vulgar approach to Jews, an approach that apparently gained some popularity in the late 1930s. Almost every headline spoke of Jews as the ultimate evil, usually in conjunction with communism and Bolshevism.⁵⁶ While *Vistnyk* described the negative role Jews played in international communism, *Frontom* discussed in detail the immoral deeds of Jewish neighbours and employers. Articles and comments were accompanied by cartoons and caricatures with Jewish and Judaeo-Bolshevik content.

Frontom's advertising section carried an announcement across the page: 'Jewish firms and enterprises constitute the material basis of communism, and that is why an honest Ukrainian does not buy from a Jew. We do not advertise Jewish firms.' It was so extreme in its antisemitic propaganda that even the OUN-affiliated *Holos natsii* ('The Nation's Voice') accused it of creating a pogrom-like atmosphere.⁵⁷

A review of the Ukrainian press in inter-war Poland which we have examined shows at least some differentiation and diversification in the presentation of Jewish-related issues. The presentation generally depended on the publication's political-ideological orientation, as well as on the subject at issue. In general, however, antisemitic views and images became increasingly explicit in the course of the 1930s, and were especially pronounced towards the close of the decade. (p.246) We may assume that Ukrainian publications of this period expressed at least to some extent attitudes that prevailed among Ukrainians, and that they also helped propagate these attitudes. It is probable that the Ukrainian press in inter-war Poland contributed to Ukrainian receptivity to Nazi antisemitic ideology and propaganda, which played a role in moulding Ukrainian attitudes and behaviour towards Jews during the Second World War and the Holocaust.

Notes:

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(1) See P. J. Potichnyi and H. Aster (eds.), *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective* (Edmonton, 1988).

- (2) See Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History* (Toronto, 1988), 435-7, 441-6, and John-Paul Himka, 'Western Ukraine in the Interwar Period', *Nationalities Papers*, 22/2 (1994), 347-63.
- (3) For information concerning the Ukrainian press in inter-war Poland, see Eugeniusz Misilo, 'Prasa Ukraińska w Polsce 1918-1939', *Kwartalnik historii prasy polskiej*, 23/4 (1984), 57-88, Yevhen Misylo, *A Bibliography of the Ukrainian Press in Poland (1918-1939) and in the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (1918-1919)* (Edmonton, 1991), and *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, 5 vols. (Toronto, 1984-93). Communist and pro-communist publications have not been examined. However, in view of the fact that such publications were banned in the course of the 1930s and that pro-Soviet sentiments among the Ukrainians sharply decreased during this period, this omission is perhaps not very significant.
- (4) See Misilo, 'Prasa Ukraińska', 65-6.
- (5) *Dilo* (12 Sept. 1922), 1.
- (6) 'Manivtsiami' ('Losing the Way'), *Dilo* (20 Sept. 1924), 1-2.
- (7) 'Sionistichni prokuratori' ('Zionist Prosecutors'), *Dilo* (5 Nov. 1925), 2.
- (8) 'U novii fazi' ('A New Phase') *Dilo* (9 Dec. 1925), 1-2, and 'Kinets' dramy' ('The End of the Drama'), *Dilo* (22 Dec. 1925), 2. For a detailed description and analysis of the Steiger affair, see Pawel Korzec, 'The Steiger Affair', *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, 3/2 (1973), 38-57.
- (9) For details, see Moshe Landau, *The Jews as a National Minority in Poland 1918-1928* (Heb.) (Jerusalem, 1988), 109-58.
- (10) 'Na pokhili ploschchiny' ('Along the Slope'), *Dilo* (1 Oct. 1924), 1-2.
- (11) 'Nashe zhydivstvo' ('Our Jewry'), *Dilo* (4 Jan. 1925), 1. For Jewish attitudes towards Ukrainization in the USSR in the mid-1920s, see Mordechai Altshuler, *Between Nationalism and Communism* (Heb.) (Tel Aviv, 1980), 155-77.
- (12) 'Assimilanti i assimilatori' ('The Assimilated and the Assimilators'), *Dilo* (27 June 1925), 1-2.
- (13) For a review of the Ukrainian press on this subject, see 'Sporidnani dushi' ('Friendly Souls'), *Dilo* (30 June 1925), 1-3.
- (14) See e.g. 'Politichni krakoviaki' ('Political Krakowiaks'—a type of Polish folk dance), *Dilo* (1 July 1925), 3-4.
- (15) 'Za pol's'kimi plechima' ('Behind the Polish Back'), *Dilo* (7 July 1925), 1-2.
- (16) See e.g. Taras Hunczak, 'A Reappraisal of Symon Petliura and Ukrainian-Jewish Relations 1917-1921', and Zosa Szajkowski, 'A Rebuttal', *Jewish Social Studies*, 31 (1969), 163-213.
- (17) Alexander J. Motyl, *The Turn to the Right: The Ideological Origins and Development of Ukrainian Nationalism 1919-1929* (New York, 1980), 49.
- (18) 'Nosii velikoi idei' ('A Purveyor of a Great Idea'), *Dilo* (28 May 1926), 1-2.
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- (19) 'Ohidna legenda' ('The Abominable Myth'), *Dilo* (30 May 1926), 1–2.
- (20) 'Velika vtrata' ('The Great Loss'), *Dilo* (5 June 1926), 2.
- (21) 'Proti chornosotenstva' ('Against Black-Hundredism'), *Hromads'kyi holos* (26 June 1926), 2. The Black Hundreds were the secret fighting squads of the fiercely antisemitic Union of the Russian People, responsible for the pogroms of 1905.
- (22) 'Podviina bukhhal'teriia' ('Double Bookkeeping'), *Dilo* (27 Oct. 1927), 1.
- (23) 'Samotsil' ('The Target'), *Dilo* (28 Oct. 1927), 1. For a discussion of the impact of the assassination and trial on Ukrainian–Jewish relations, see Shimon Redlich, 'The Reflection of the Petliura Affair in the Ukrainian and Jewish Press in Poland', *Proceedings of the Tenth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Division B, vol. i (Jerusalem, 1990), 429–33.
- (24) 'Stalosiia' ('It Happened'), *Dilo* (29 Oct. 1927), 1.
- (25) Dmitro Levits'kii, 'Pislia paris'koho protsesu' ('After the Paris Trial'), *Dilo* (2 Nov. 1927), 1.
- (26) *Jewish Chronicle* (19, 26 Jan., 2, 9, 16 Feb. 1934). For Ukrainian reactions to the *Jewish Chronicle*, see 'Zhidivski napasti na ukraintsiiv' ('Jewish Provocations against Ukrainians'), *Nove selo* ('The New Village') (11 Feb. 1934), 5, and 'Khto ruiniue nashe selo?' ('Who Ruins our Village?'), *Nove Selo* (4 Mar. 1934), 2.
- (27) 'Antisemitizm ukraintsiiv ta nebezpechna gra zhidiv' ('Ukrainians' Antisemitism and the Jews' Dangerous Game'), *Dilo* (4 Feb. 1934). *Bat'kivshchina* repeatedly complained about the economic exploitation of Ukrainians by Jews and Jewish competition in the free professions. See issues of 8 Nov. 1934, 7 Feb., 1 Apr., and 16 May 1935.
- (28) 'Antisemitizm ukraintsiiv', pt. 2, *Dilo* (5 Feb. 1934).
- (29) 'Protiukraints'ka zhidiv's'ka kampaniia trivae dal'she' ('The Anti-Ukrainian Jewish Campaign Continues'), *Dilo* (12 Feb. 1934).
- (30) 'Komu potribnii tsei velikii shum?' ('Who Needs this Big Hullabaloo?'), *Novii chas* (22 Feb. 1934), 2. In early 1936 *Dilo* often discussed Ukrainian–Jewish relations. Dr Stepan Baran, a member of the Polish Sejm representing the UNDO, stated that although the Jewish problem on Ukrainian lands had been growing, Ukrainians would never use Hitlerite methods (*Dilo* (23 Jan. 1936)). Baran's statement provoked a number of positive reactions in the Polish Jewish press.
- (31) 'Novi akti antisemitizmu u Pol'shchi' ('New Acts of Antisemitism in Poland'), *Dilo* (14 May 1937). Some Ukrainian politicians condemned Polish anti-Jewish legislation concerning ritual slaughter (see *Dilo* (3 Mar. 1938)). The Jewish press praised this stand.
- (32) 'Pislia zhidiv—cherha na nas' ('After the Jews—Our Turn'), *Dilo* (30 May 1937).
- (33) 'Protizhidiv's'ka stikhiia v Pol'shchi' ('The Anti-Jewish Forces in Poland'), *Dilo* (1 July 1937).
- (34) 'Chi mozhлива i aktual'na ukrains'ko-zhidiv's'ke porozuminnia?' ('Is a Polish–Jewish Understanding Possible and Real?'), *Dilo* (4 Aug. 1937).
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- (35) The impact of Soviet collectivization on the Ukrainian population in the USSR is discussed in Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (London, 1986), and the impact of Nazi Germany on the Ukrainians is discussed in Ryszard Torzecki, *Kwestia ukraińska w polityce III Rzeszy 1933-1945* (Warsaw, 1972).
- (36) Michael Sosnowsky, *Dmytro Donzow: A Political Portrait* (Ukrainian) (New York, 1974), 175, 182.
- (37) Motyl, *Turn to the Right*, 72-3.
- (38) Dmytro Dontsov, 'Symon Petliura', *Literaturno-Naukovyi Vistnyk*, 57-8 (1926), 326-8, quoted in Motyl, *Turn to the Right*, 73.
- (39) Dmytro Dontsov, 'Tochka nad i' ('Dotting the i'), *Vistnyk* (Oct. 1934), 759.
- (40) Sganarel, 'David Vindzor i David Frankfurter' ('David Windsor and David Frankfurter'), *Vistnyk* (Jan. 1937), 53-4.
- (41) Dmytro Dontsov, 'Ukrains'ke vacuum i ridna koltuneriia' ('The Ukrainian Vacuum and our Own Bigotry'), *Vistnyk* (Feb. 1934), 137. Litvinov's original Jewish name was Wallach. He served as Soviet commissar of foreign affairs (1930-9). Radek's original Jewish name was Sobelsohn. In the 1920s he served as secretary of the Communist International and as chief foreign affairs commentator in Soviet newspapers in the 1930s until his purge in 1937.
- (42) Dmytro Dontsov, 'Do konsolidatsii' ('Towards Consolidation'), *Vistnyk* (Apr. 1934), 304.
- (43) Dmytro Dontsov, 'Symon Petliura', quoted in Motyl, *Turn to the Right*, 73.
- (44) The article was published under one of Dontsov's pseudonyms. See S. Zmunchillo, 'Rokovani godini' ('Fateful Hours'), *Vistnyk* (June 1938), 421-2.
- (45) *Novii chas* (14 June 1937), 2.
- (46) *Ibid.* (19 June 1937), 4.
- (47) 'Suchasne polozhenia zhidiv' ('The Contemporary Situation of the Jews'), *Dilo* (8 Sept. 1938).
- (48) R.O., 'Obludniki humanitarizmu' ('The Hypocrites of Humanitarianism'), *Vistnyk* (Feb. 1939), 117.
- (49) D.D., 'Zagadka IIIoi imperii' ('The Riddle of the Third Reich'), *Vistnyk* (May 1939), 326-42.
- (50) 'Rogatii kontrrevoliutsioner' ('The Horned Revolutionary'), *Ukrains'ki visti* (2 May 1938), 8-9, and 'Sirena' ('The Siren'), *Ukrains'ki visti* (31 Oct. 1938), 4.
- (51) *Ukrains'ki visti* (12 Aug. 1938), 4.
- (52) *Ukrains'ki visti* (17 Oct. 1938), 1; (3 Nov. 1938), 2; (5 Nov. 1938), 2; (2 Dec. 1938), 1; (9 Dec. 1938), 2; (23 Jan. 1939), 1; (9 Feb. 1939), 1.

(53) 'Verkhovins'ka aktsiia: Iak zhidi ozhebrachovali karpats'ku Ukrainu' ('The Verkhovinsk Act: How the Jews Impoverished Sub-Carpathian Rus'), *Ukrains'ki visti* (3 Dec. 1938), 3.

(54) 'Episkop I. Buchko proti antisemitizmu' ('Bishop I. Buchko against Antisemitism'), *Dilo* (18 Sept. 1936).

(55) 'Za samostiinii ukrains'kii pidkhid do inshikh narodiv' ('In Favour of an Independent Ukrainian Approach to Other Nations'), *Dilo* (14 Aug. 1938). The OUN-affiliated *Holos* was quite outspoken on Hitler's antisemitic policies and legislation and greeted them with great interest and approval. See e.g. issues of 1 Jan., 29 May, and 16 and 20 Nov. 1938.

(56) Some examples of such article headlines are: 'Jews Expel Ukrainian Workers', 'The Secret of the Jewish Success', 'Jews and Communists on their Way to Crack Heads', 'Don't Sell Horsehair to the Jews', 'A Forest Worker in the Clutches of Jews', 'What Do the Jews Want?', 'Let's Unmask them and their Plans', 'A Jew Wants to Dictate to Workers'. These articles were printed in two single issues of *Frontom* (no. 7 (20 Nov. 1936), and no. 10 (20 Dec. 1936)).

(57) Osip Boidunik, 'Na pokhiliu ploshchi' ('On a Downward Slope'), *Holos natsii* (8 Nov. 1936). *Frontom's* reaction appeared in no. 7 (20 Nov. 1936). For a new and thought-provoking conceptual approach to the question of Ukrainian collaboration during the Holocaust, see John-Paul Himka's forthcoming 'Ukrainian Collaboration in the Extermination of the Jews during World War II: Sorting out the Long-Term and Conjunctural Factors', *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, 13.

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