

# SPAIN AND THE REBORN POLISH REPUBLIC 1918-1921:

Political affairs, territorial disputes and  
ethnic minorities

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## **Abstract**

During the Great War, leading Spanish politicians and most Spanish newspapers, including their contributors and correspondents, were in favour of Poland reemerging as an independent state as a result of the war. However, there were differences between them, particularly between Germanophile and pro-Entente Spaniards, regarding the extension, functioning and patronage or alliances that this new state should have. Reborn Poland and Spain initiated diplomatic relations in May 1919. Through the Spanish legation in Warsaw, diplomats paid much attention to all the conflicts the new state faced with neighbouring states to establish its borders and commented on these conflicts in detail to Spain's State Ministry. The Polish-Lithuanian conflict over Vilna, and, to a much lesser extent, the Gdańsk question, affected Spanish diplomacy directly. The Polish-Soviet War generated much concern in Spain due to fears of a Bolshevik expansion and the internal social unrest the Iberian country suffered since 1917. The episodes of anti-Jewish violence in Poland in the aftermath of the Great War generated great impacts in Spain, where there was a pro-Jewish movement at the time. This led to many articles on Polish Jews appearing in Spain's press.

## **KEYWORDS**

Poland, Spain, International relations 1918-1921, Poland's independence, League of Nations, Great War, territorial disputes, plebiscites, Silesian Uprisings, Lwów, Vilna, Piłsudski, Dmowski, Second Polish Republic, Polish-Soviet War, Eastern Galicia, Greater Poland Uprising, Eastern Prussia plebiscite, Cieszyn Silesia conflict, Danzig Free City, Polish Jews, Spanish press, Alfonso XIII, November 5 Proclamation, New Imperialism.

## Table of contents

Introduction .....	5
Opening statement.....	5
Goal of the dissertation.....	5
Literature review: state of research before the project .....	6
Research questions .....	7
Pre-research hypotheses .....	9
Methodology .....	11
CHAPTER 1: SPAIN AND THE POLISH QUESTION IN THE GREAT WAR: 1914-1918.....	16
Introduction .....	16
Historical background .....	17
The Polish Question in Spanish Politics during the Great War.....	19
The Polish Question in Spain's press and the Spanish Great War correspondents in the Polish Lands .....	25
Spain's reactions to the Great Duke Nicholas's Oath to the Polish people.....	37
Spain and the creation of a new Polish kingdom by the Central Powers on November 5 1916 .....	46
Spain and the 1918 Brest-Litovsk Treaties .....	82
Spain and Polish political conceptions in the Great War .....	90
Conclusions .....	127
Views by Spain's chargé d'affaires in Warsaw on obtained Poland's independence and the Great War in 1919.....	128
CHAPTER 2: SPAIN AND POLAND'S WESTERN, SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN BORDERS 1918-1921.....	132
Introduction .....	132
Spain and the Greater Poland Uprising 1918-1919.....	132
Spain and the Polish-Czech conflict over Cieszyn Silesia: 1918-1920.....	148
Spain and the Polish-German conflict over Upper Silesia 1919-1921 .....	162
Spain and Danzig Free City's creation and development: 1919-1921 .....	188
Spain and the Eastern Prussia (Warmia and Masuria) plebiscite: 1919-1920.....	211
Conclusions .....	227
CHAPTER 3: SPAIN AND POLAND'S EASTERN BORDER 1918-1921 .....	229
Introduction .....	229
Spain and the Polish-Ukrainian conflict over Eastern Galicia 1918-1919.....	230
Spain and the Polish-Soviet War 1919-1921.....	252
Spain and the Polish-Lithuanian conflict over the Vilna region 1918-1821 .....	331
Conclusions .....	353
CHAPTER 4: SPAIN AND THE POLISH-JEWISH QUESTION 1918-1921 .....	354

Introduction: historical and ethnographic background.....	354
Spain and the Jews in the aftermath of the Great War .....	358
Anti-Jewish violence in Poland and its consequences on Poland’s reputation in Spain .....	362
Spanish views on Antisemitism in Poland .....	391
Zionism and the Polish-Jewish Question .....	396
Assimilation or Integration of Jews in Polish Society.....	398
The Little Treaty of Versailles on the Protection of National Minorities .....	400
Jewish Autonomy within Poland.....	402
Polish Laws and the Jews: Citizenship and Nationality within the New Polish State .....	406
Cultural and social aspects of Polish Jews’ reality.....	411
Conclusions .....	422
<b>FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RESEARCH RESULTS .....</b>	<b>425</b>
Final Conclusions .....	425
Answered research questions .....	436
Limitations .....	447
Contribution to the field .....	448
Recommendations for further research on the topic.....	448
Final statement .....	449
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>450</b>
Annexes.....	462

# Introduction

## Opening statement

The period from November 1918 to March 1921, together with the preceding years of the Great War, is one of the most complex in modern Polish history. The Great War created a new world order and ended the old nineteenth century world. In addition, it brought Poland back as a European political reality. I chose this period for analysis precisely because it contains many interesting threads and layers: Polish and international, diplomatic and geopolitical, strategic and socio-economic, ethnographic and cultural. The political resurrection of a state 123 years after its defunction is an extraordinarily complex process. This is why the project aims at bringing some new light, through the Spanish lens of the period, to this quite overwhelming complexity.

Most of the Polish affairs in the examined period, such as the conflicts that determined the new state's new borders – with the exception of the Vilna question – did not have a large impact on Spanish politics and diplomacy or any large consequences on the country's legal and political realities. However, these Polish events had an impact and impacts in the Spanish press and were commented on by Spanish diplomats.

This dissertation aims at analysing the Spanish echoes of the events that led to Polish independence and to the specific borders of the new Polish state. It is the result of a thorough research of press and diplomatic documents, a close reading of scientific literature over a few years, and my deep interest in modern history, modern Polish history, diplomatic history, and the Great War and post-Great War periods.

## Goal of the dissertation

This thesis aims at presenting a detailed picture of the views held by Spain's diplomats, newspapers' editors, press correspondents, press contributors, and (less often) politicians, on both the local and global processes and events that led to Polish independence in late 1918. Even more importantly, the dissertation also aims at analysing Spanish views on the circumstances, conflicts, wars and diplomatic events from November 1918 to March 1921 that defined the borders, ethnic composition and social structures of the new Polish state. This includes a study of Spanish views on the reality of ethnic minorities at the beginning of the

reborn Republic's existence, with a particular focus on Polish Jews. A secondary research goal revolves around the concept of imperialism, and imperialism's popularity, during and after the Great War, on the basis of Spanish views on political processes and events that determined Polish political and geopolitical reality. At this point, it must be highlighted that I understand imperialism as the policy and strategy conducted by a state in order to obtain high levels of political, military control or influence over other states, regarded as inferior, by means of aggression, coercion, economic power or military force display. In regard to imperialism's definition it is worth remarking that (as pointed out by Jerome Kohn) renowned German political scientist Hannah Arendt linked New Imperialism to "expansion for the sake of expansion"<sup>1</sup>, whereas (as pointed out by *The Guardian*) British historian Richard J Evans links 19<sup>th</sup> century imperialism to the usage of violence by European Empires against other peoples or nations<sup>2</sup>. It is important to keep in mind these thoughts on imperialism when coming up with conclusions about the references made to imperialism, in relation to Polish affairs, by Spanish journalists, press contributors or diplomats at the time.

Another goal of this thesis has been to conduct research in the field of modern Polish history from a different, external perspective, not only that provided by foreign primary sources. This is the external perspective of a person born and raised in Western, (and, more specifically Southern Europe), a non-Polish junior researcher, who is not part of Poland's academia, but is deeply interested in Polish and East-Central European history during the Great War and interwar periods. Therefore, the project attempts to fill a clear gap in international historiography of Poland and East-Central Europe.

## Literature review: state of research before the project

Although certain publications in Polish academia have shallowly addressed Spanish-Polish relations within the period under analysis<sup>3</sup> and other Polish-Spanish comparative history

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<sup>1</sup>J. Kohn, *Remarks on Imperialism and Politics*, "Hannaharendt.net Journal for Political Thinking", Issue 1, Volume 1 – May 2011, <https://www.hannaharendt.net/index.php/han/article/view/153/272> [accessed on 18.09.2024]. See: H. Arendt, *Imperialism: Part Two of The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, New York 1968.

<sup>2</sup> "Review. The Pursuit of Power: Europe 1815-1914 review – an age of contradictions", 'The Guardian', 4.11.2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/nov/04/the-pursuit-of-power-europe-penguin-richard-j-evans> [accessed on 18.09.2024]. See: R.J. Evans, *The Pursuit of Power : Europe 1815-1914*, Penguin, New York 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Santiago de Pablo in his paper *Una lección ejemplar. El nacionalismo vasco y la independencia de Polonia 1918*, [in:] *España y Europa del Este. Miradas recíprocas (siglos XVI-XXI)*, Warsaw 2020, p.109–121, briefly explores

works have also touched on the period<sup>4</sup>, I could identify no Spanish works dedicated exclusively to these years of Poland's history.

However, what is more relevant here is that no academic work has yet looked at the political and geopolitical creation and development of the new Polish state during and after the Great War from a purely Spanish perspective of the time, with a detailed analysis of the Spanish press and diplomatic correspondence, except for Cristina Gonzalez Caizán's and Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski's paper analysing Sofía Casanova's articles for the newspaper 'ABC' during the Polish-Soviet War, including some context on Casanova's reporting from Russia and Poland<sup>5</sup>, as well as the same authors' text on the Spanish diplomacy and press perspective on the Polish Soviet War in 1919 and 1920<sup>6</sup>. This dissertation attempts to fill this gap and takes the opportunity to analyse views and interpretations that have not been examined yet in the historiography. In addition, my analysis conducted could, to a small extent, contribute to a better understanding of the historical processes in Poland and East-Central Europe from 1914 to 1921, especially between 1918 and 1921.

## Research questions

The main research question that is:

What were the main trends in Spain's media, political and diplomatic circles during the Great War and in the period 1918-1921 regarding perceptions on the Polish question, Polish

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how Basque nationalists saw in the Polish question during the Great War a model for their national aspiration. This is a paper focused on Basque politics, and not on the Polish reality. In the introduction of his book *Podwójna gra, Rzeczpospolita Polska wobec hiszpańskiej wojny domowej 1936–1939*, Warszawa 2014, Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski briefly describes Polish-Spanish relations after the Great War. Małgorzata Nalewajko, on the other hand, explores historical Jewish connections between Spain and Poland in her paper: *Episodios judíos en la imagen mútua de España y Polonia*, "Itinerarios. Revista de estudios lingüísticos, literarios, históricos y antropológicos" 2012, nr 16, p. 181–200.

<sup>4</sup> J. Orella Martínez, M. Mizerska-Wrotkowska, *Poland and Spain in the Interwar and Postwar Period*, Madrid 2015; P. Sawicki, *Polska-Hiszpania, Hiszpania-Polska. Poszerzanie horyzontów*, Wrocław 2013. Many papers and conferences have been dedicated to Sofía Casanova and her work as a correspondent and writer in a Polish-Spanish context. Worth mentioning, among others, is the conference publication: B. Turowska, *Sofía Casanova Lutosławska – hiszpańska pisarka, Polka z wyboru*, [in:] *Materiały z konferencji poświęconej Sofii Casanowie Lutosławskiej w Drozdowie w dniu 9 września 2011 oraz teksty nadesłane*, red. P. Sawicki, M. Filipowicz-Rudek, Drozdowo 2012.

<sup>5</sup> C. González Caizán, J. Ciechanowski, *Wojna polsko-rosyjska z lat 1919-1920 w korespondencjach Sofii Casanovy dla madryckiego dziennika „ABC”*, [in:] *O niepodległą: Kierunek północno-wschodni (1920)*, red. D. Maksimiuk, Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Białystok-Warszawa 2022.

<sup>6</sup> J. Ciechanowski, C. González Caizán, *Wojna polsko-rosyjska 1919-1920 z perspektywy hiszpańskiej*, [in:] *1920 rok-wojna światów, t.2: Europa wobec wojny polsko-bolszewickiej*, red. E. Kowalczyk, K. Rokicki, Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Warszawa 2023.

independence movements and the creation and territorial formation of the new Polish state as well as new Poland's national minorities?

Additional research questions this project has attempted to answer are:

- How important were Polish affairs in the Spanish press?
- What level of understanding did Spanish press contributors and correspondents have of the complex Polish political, ethnical and territorial affairs?
- How complex, deep and detailed were the analyses on Poland written by Spanish press contributors and diplomats?
- How did the Spanish press editors' and correspondents' stands on England, France, the United States and Germany determine their stands on Polish affairs?
- Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors mostly in favour of Poland resurging as a state or kingdom as a result of the Great War?
- Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors believe an independent Poland would arise as a result of the war?
- Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland containing lands from the three Partitions?
- Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland being born under the auspice of the Entente?
- Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland being born within Russia?
- Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland being born in association with the Central Powers?
- Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland being born under the auspice of the Western Allies?
- Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland resembling the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and expanding to the East, in line with Piłsudski's federalist view?
- Were Spanish diplomats, newspapers editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland where only ethnic Poles would live?
- Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors want Upper Silesia to be part of the new Polish state or part of Germany? Did they believe the new Polish state was entitled to possess that territory?
- Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors want the Cieszyn Silesia region to be part of the new Polish state or part of Czechoslovakia?



- Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors want Gdańsk to be part of the new Polish state, a free city or part of Germany?
- Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors believe the Polish offensive in Ukraine was a good idea for Poland's chances of success?
- Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors expect the new Polish state to win the war against the Soviets?
- Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors believe that the Treaty of Riga was a positive outcome of the Polish-Soviet war for Poland?
- Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors believe that Masuria and Warmia should belong to the new Polish state? Did they expect Germany or Poland to win the plebiscite?
- Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors believe that Lwów (Lemberg) and Eastern Galicia should belong to the new Polish state or to Ukraine?
- Did Spanish diplomats, newspapers' editors or press contributors believe that the Jews should have autonomy within the new Polish state?
- Which Polish political, diplomatic and military actions and decisions were regarded in Spain as imperialist? By whom and why?
- What was the knowledge among Spanish press editors, contributors and diplomats on the ethnographic, social and historical reality of Poland's eastern borderlands, the so-called *Kresy*?

### Pre-research hypotheses

The first pre-research hypothesis of the project is that Poland as a nation without an existing independent state was not well known in Spain before its 1918 independence. Poland and Spain are on the opposite edges of Europe. Although there have been periods of more intense cultural and trade relations between both nations, the relations between them had never been so strong to think that before 1918 and especially before the Great War Polish reality and history was well known among most Spanish journalists, writers and diplomats. Another pre-research hypothesis is the assumption that Poland was very much associated with Russia in the Spanish imaginary at the time. One would think that the fact that many Poles lived within the Russian Empire, the fact that both Poles and Russians are Slavs and that both nations are located in Eastern Europe might lead average Spaniards and also press contributors, unfamiliar with Polish affairs, to believe that Poles and Russians were almost the same people or at least closely related. In regard to the Polish question itself, at a political level, another pre-research

hypothesis is that in Spain most journalists, press contributors and correspondents were favourable to the rebirth of a Polish state and considered that Poles deserved their independence. One would think that despite the Polish reality not being well known in Spain, among Spanish press circles those acquainted both with Polish history and with the Poles' political ambitions to recover their own state would be supportive of the Polish cause. In a similar way, yet another pre-research hypothesis would be that Spanish diplomacy saw Poland's independence as a positive outcome of the war. Knowing that Spain, at least its monarchy and governments, was, despite its neutrality, supportive of the new post-war order discussed at the Paris Peace Conference and was engaged in the League of Nations project, so one would think that Spain's State Ministry and the members of its diplomatic missions were generally by the end of the war favourable to the creation of a new Polish independent state. Additionally, one would not find any reasons for Spanish diplomats to be against Poland's independence during the war, as long as this political project for Poland would not be linked exclusively to one of the sides in conflict, with one belligerent side opposed to such a political solution for Poland. Another essential pre-research hypothesis is that Catholicism was the linking element between Spain and Poland that made many Spanish writers, press contributors and correspondents – influenced by their faith and values – had sympathies for Poland. Despite the significant cultural differences between both nations, and even different approaches to religion, and to Catholicism in particular, one could in principle think that Spanish press editors and contributors as well as Spanish diplomats, and especially those with a more Catholic profile, would see the Polish question favourably because of Poland's Catholicism. I assume that most Spanish press editors, contributors and correspondents were favourable to a Poland taking all the lands predominantly inhabited by ethnic Poles. In other words, this would mean that these Spaniards were in favour of a reunion of all the territories in East-Central Europe where most inhabitants were Polish under one independent state. In addition, I assume that here were Spanish supporters of the Polish cause and of a strong reborn Poland among both Germanophile and pro-Allied Spanish journalists, press contributors and correspondents, at least during the Great War. The federalist conception of Poland somewhat inspired by the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was likely assessed negatively by the Germanophile Spanish press, as one could think these journalists were against a strong Poland in the east of Germany, even if it worked geopolitically as a stronghold against Russia. Along with this idea, one could think that a small Poland rather than a territorially extended Poland was preferred by those Spanish press contributors or editors with sympathies towards Germany or Russia. It was well known to me that the Polish-Soviet War was one the main events defining the size, form and ethnic composition of reborn Poland and

that this conflict placed at stake the political future of Europe. I therefore hypothesised that for most Spanish press editors and commentators, a Polish victory over the Bolsheviks was desired and regarded as important for Spain's security and stability. Furthermore, historically Spain, or at least since its existence as a state, had not had many border conflicts, at least in mainland Iberian Spain, therefore the territorial disputes question might generate especial curiosity and interest in Spanish press at the time. Moreover, those commenting on Poland's border conflicts might not find many analogies between these Polish affairs and previous historical events in Spain.

## Methodology

The research method used in this work is historical, which means an analysis and criticism of primary sources, namely Spanish press articles and diplomatic correspondence (and some Polish diplomatic documents), as well as books and Polish press articles published. Secondary sources, namely Polish and international academic literature, have also been analysed and criticized. A comparative method has also been used, although to a much lesser extent, by means of which analogies were drawn, both between Polish and Spanish realities of the time and between Poland's and Spain's histories. The analysis of historical events in this project is presented in a structure that is both chronological and thematical, with the first chapter more chronological than the remaining ones.

The focus has been placed on Poland's and East-Central Europe's history in the period 1914-1921, not on Spain's history. References to Spanish history have only been made, when the primary sources made comparisons between Polish and Spanish histories, or when such references were needed to understand particular reactions by journalists, press contributors, correspondents or diplomats to particular issues of Poland's experience.

It must be clarified this is not a study of Polish-Spanish relations *sensu stricto*, but instead a dissertation focused on the Spanish perspective on Polish affairs. The relations between the two countries are covered in some sections of this work, when they are important to understand particular aspects of Spanish reactions to the political events regarding Poland, mainly reactions of Spanish diplomats. It must be also be clarified that in this project the main research focus is on what Spaniards wrote on Polish affairs and not on their biographies, although references to their background are sometimes made.

I understand and am well aware that an analysis of the Spanish press and Spain's State Ministry diplomatic correspondence is not enough for a holistic view of Spanish attitudes towards Polish affairs, but, at the same time, I understand that my primary sources are useful to obtain a wholistic enough of a view on the reflections in Spain on the Polish question during the Great War and on Polish affairs in the period 1918-1921.

The opening point in time is November 11, 1918, the day Piłsudski obtained Poland's military power from the Regency Council, although the whole Great War has also been analysed since the beginning of the conflict, and especially since the Great Duke Nicholas's Declaration to the Poles on August 14, 1914. The timeline closes on March 20, 1921, the day the plebiscite in Upper Silesia took place, and March 18, 1921, the day the Treaty of Riga between Poland and Soviet Russia and Ukraine was signed, and March 17, 1921, the day the Polish Constitution, was approved.

All the Spanish diplomatic correspondence examined in this dissertation can be found in the Foreign Affairs Ministry collection of the National Historical Archive in Madrid<sup>7</sup>. The reception of the Polish affairs by Spanish diplomats has been analysed mainly by means of the correspondence and reports from the years 1919-1921 coming from the Spanish Legation in Warsaw, as well as other correspondence throughout the years 1914-1921 between the State Ministry and the embassies and legations Spain had across Europe and the world, especially those in Paris, London, Petrograd, Berlin, Vienna and Washington. No relevant primary sources for this dissertation have been found in the diplomatic correspondence between State Ministry and Spain's legation in Prague, unfortunately.

All the Spanish press sources can be found online, via Spain's National Library 'Hemeroteca Digital' service<sup>8</sup>, or via the so-called Virtual Search Engine of historical press of Spain's Culture Ministry<sup>9</sup>, or in the case of the newspaper 'ABC', in the online archive of this newspaper<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> It must be explained that all the documents in the Exteriores (Foreign Affairs or previously called State Ministry) collection of the National Historical Archive corresponding to the examined period in this thesis were only available on site in the archive, are not digitalized and cannot be immediately copied. In addition, the state of this collection is not the best for its research given the amount of missing and disordered documents and the fact some of the folders are not even stored in boxes but just tied by means of strings. It must be also noted that in many of the folders checked there are no reference numbers from the Archive and contain only the telegram or letter number that was assigned by State Ministry.

<sup>8</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/advanced>

<sup>9</sup> <https://prensahistorica.mcu.es/es/consulta/busqueda.do>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ABC.es/archivo/buscador/>

Relevant comments, conclusions, pieces of information, data, comparisons and analogies found in the primary sources – that is, the Spanish newspapers from the period 1918-1921, and the aforementioned diplomatic correspondence – have been analysed and checked against secondary sources, mostly Polish but also international academic literature, from the early twenty-first century but also from the previous decades of the twentieth century. In some cases, contemporary Polish newspapers were also used as primary sources.

The dissertation is written at three levels of analysis: The first level corresponds to the direct Spanish views on Polish affairs only, the second to the Spanish views on Polish affairs taking into account the stances of the Western Powers and Germany, and the last and third to the Spanish views on Polish affairs taking into account the existing world order and the concept of imperialism.

The dissertation is divided into four chapters and an additional final chapter with the overall conclusions and research results. There is an introductory chapter focused on the Spanish views on the Polish Question during the Great War; then a second chapter focused on the Spanish views on the conflicts and territorial disputes that Poland faced primarily with Germany but also with Czechoslovakia on its western, southern and northern borders, including Greater Poland, Upper Silesia, Cieszyn Silesia, Danzig and Eastern Prussia (Warmia and Masuria); a third chapter revolving around the conflicts the reborn Polish republic faced in the East against Ukraine, Soviet Russia and Lithuania, as seen from a Spanish perspective; then, a fourth chapter on the Spanish views on the Polish-Jewish question, and finally the conclusions and research results section.

For the Spanish press analyses a set of core Spanish newspapers has been selected: ‘La Correspondencia de España’, ‘Heraldo de Madrid’, ‘El Sol’, ‘El Liberal’, ‘El Imparcial’, ‘La Época’, ‘El Debate’, ‘La Acción’ and ‘ABC’ (plus ‘ABC’'s weekly ‘Blanco y Negro’). However, in particular sections of the dissertation, additional Spanish press sources have been used, such as the newspapers ‘El Progreso’, ‘El Universo’ and the weekly ‘España’.

The selected press titles can be sorted in pro-Western, neutral or Germanophile, with the pro-Western newspapers being rather liberal and progressive, with conservative exceptions, and the Germanophile newspapers rather conservative. Among the bluntly pro-Allied newspapers we can name ‘La Correspondencia de España’<sup>11</sup>, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’<sup>12</sup>, ‘El

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<sup>11</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/issn/1137-1188> [accessed 22.04.2023]

<sup>12</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/issn/2171-0090> [accessed 22.04.2023]

Sol'<sup>13</sup>, 'El Liberal'<sup>14</sup>. As rather neutral newspapers, based on their announced political orientations, we can name 'El Imparcial'<sup>15</sup> (although it received French funds at the beginning of the war and became clearly Germanophile only towards the end of the Great War after receiving German funds) and 'La Época' (who in reality also received funds from France)<sup>16</sup>. As rather Germanophile we can sort 'La Acción'<sup>17</sup>, 'El Debate'<sup>18</sup> and 'ABC'<sup>19</sup>. In addition, it must be highlighted that 'El Imparcial', 'El Heraldo de Madrid', 'El Sol' and 'El Liberal' were clearly liberal newspapers, whereas the rest were all conservative, namely 'La Época'<sup>20</sup>, with 'ABC' ('La Acción' also self-proclaimed as a monarchic newspaper) clearly pro-monarchic and 'El Liberal' the most republican among them<sup>21</sup>. 'El Debate' was a clearly pro-Catholic newspaper and 'La Acción' can be regarded as a pro-Catholic newspaper as well.

It must be explained that during the Great War most Spanish newspapers received funds from foreign ministries of the belligerent powers. 'La Correspondencia de España', 'El Liberal' and even 'El Imparcial' and 'La Época', were funded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whereas 'ABC', 'La Acción' and also 'El Liberal' were funded by Germany at some point during the war<sup>22</sup>. A question remains about the orientation of these newspapers once the Great War was over. In 'ABC', the Germanophile orientation clearly continues after November 1918, and for most newspapers the same trend of orientation continuity during from late 1918 to early 1921 can be observed.

However, 'ABC''s case is particular, because, among the newspaper's contributors and correspondents in general, and particularly among those who discussed Polish affairs, there were authors with ideas that were far from the newspaper's main political vision, such as Sofía Casanova. The sorting has been made based on the descriptions of the newspapers found in Spain's national library database<sup>23</sup>, and based on Cristina Barreiro's article *España y la Gran*

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<sup>13</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/issn/2171-262X> [accessed 22.04.2023]

<sup>14</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/issn/2174-6648> [accessed 22.04.2023]

<sup>15</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/issn/2171-0244> [accessed 22.04.2023]

<sup>16</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/issn/2254-559X> [accessed 22.04.2023]

<sup>17</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/issn/2171-5181> [accessed 22.04.2023]

<sup>18</sup> C. Barreiro Gordillo, *España y la Gran Guerra a través de la prensa*, "Aportes", año XXIX (1/2014), N. 84, p. 164.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 172–173.

<sup>20</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/issn/2254-559X> [accessed 22.04.2023] According to Spain's National library data base 'La Época' was "a defender of a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy and from his liberal-conservative position".

<sup>21</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/issn/2174-6648> [accessed 22.04.2023]

<sup>22</sup> C. Barreiro Gordillo, *op. cit.*, p. 161–182.

<sup>23</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/publications>

*Guerra a través de la prensa (Spain and the Great War through the press)*<sup>24</sup>. This trend of having contributors and correspondents with ideas opposed or different to those of the newspaper's editorial orientation is also seen in other newspapers of the time, especially in 'La Correspondencia de España', 'El Heraldo de Madrid' and 'El Imparcial'. In addition, it must be noted that from 1906 to 1923 'El Liberal', 'El Imparcial' and 'El Heraldo de Madrid' were part of the same press company, Sociedad Editorial Española<sup>25</sup>.

The opinions of all those Spanish writers, journalists, correspondents, press contributors not linked to Poland in any way on Polish affairs are an important extra asset and a priceless added value.

References have also been made to significant texts published in French, British or German newspapers when Spanish newspapers commented or published them in their editorial texts or in texts written by particular press contributors.

Direct diplomatic relations between Poland and Spain were not taken into consideration in this work. Polish internal political affairs in the view of Spain's press and diplomatic apparatus have not been given full attention in this work. These have been only analysed when related to the territorial and armed conflicts the reborn Poland faced.

A whole chapter has been dedicated to Spanish views on the Polish-Jewish question and the experience of the Jewish national minority. This is justified by the large amount of primary sources on the topic, reflecting that in relation to the new Polish Republic, Jewish affairs had a large impact on the Spanish press (although much less in Spanish diplomacy). The Spanish views on Ukraine and the Ukrainian nation, which became a national minority in the reborn Polish republic, mainly in Eastern Galicia and Volhynia, is analysed, but with less attention than the Jewish question, in chapter 3.

In most cases the names of towns have been translated into English. The name Vilna (Wilno) has been used instead of Vilnius since it was the most common way to name the city in English during the researched period. Lwów, and in certain cases Lemberg if referring to events before the rebirth of the Polish state, is used instead of the current Ukrainian name Lviv.

Finally, it must be noted that the quotations extracted from primary sources and secondary sources in Spanish and Polish have been translated into English in the text but also added in the original language in the footnotes.

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<sup>24</sup> C. Barreiro Gordillo, *op. cit.*, p. 161-182.

<sup>25</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/issn/2174-6648> [accessed 26.04.2023]

# CHAPTER 1: SPAIN AND THE POLISH QUESTION IN THE GREAT WAR: 1914-1918

## Introduction

The goal of this first part of the dissertation is, on the one hand, to find trends regarding Spanish views – expressed mostly in the press, but also in diplomatic reports – regarding the Polish question in the Great War, and on the other hand, to confirm or reject the pre-research hypothesis that Spain was generally positively disposed towards Poland’s political freedom and towards Poles, their culture and their way of living. The research methodology in this first chapter is the analysis of nine daily Spanish newspapers, from different ideological backgrounds and with different attitudes towards the belligerent sides in the conflict<sup>26</sup>. The selection of examined newspapers has been done after consulting Cristina Barreiro’s aforementioned article *España y la Gran Guerra a través de la prensa* (Spain and the Great War through the press), partly by taking into account the significance and reach of the newspapers, as described by the author <sup>27</sup>, and after consulting the descriptions of the main newspapers of the period on Spain’s National Library database <sup>28</sup>.

The fact that there was no Spanish legation in Warsaw during the Great War – because Poland was non-existent as a state, and diplomatic relations between both nations were non-existent – forced the archival research for this first chapter to be focused on diplomatic communication between Spain’s State Ministry and the Spanish embassies in Petrograd, Berlin, Vienna, Paris and London. The lack of a diplomatic representation in Warsaw, leaving the honorary consulate aside, makes the press sources play an even more important role than in the next chapters.

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<sup>26</sup> Among the selected newspapers we find the conservative Germanophile newspapers ‘ABC’, ‘La Acción’ and ‘El Debate’, the last two having a strong pro-Catholic orientation. Conservative Germanophile newspaper ‘La Acción’ appeared in February 1915 so only press editions from that moment until December 1918, included, have been checked. Then we also find the allegedly neutrally-oriented, neither Germanophile nor pro-Entente newspapers ‘El Imparcial’ and ‘La Epoca’. Finally we can find pro-allied newspapers ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, ‘El Sol’, which didn’t start functioning as a newspaper until December 1, 1917, so only the newspaper’s daily editions from that date until December 1918 have been used in this chapter. The other seven daily newspapers were active throughout the whole Great War period. press sources, which have a much larger role in the first part of the thesis than on the following ones.

<sup>27</sup> C. Barreiro Gordillo, “España y la Gran Guerra a través de la prensa”, *op. cit.*

<sup>28</sup> <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/advanced>



## Historical background

Spain and administratively non-existent Poland, were in the very early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the opposite geographic edges of Western Civilization. Spain was the western European gate in front of the Arab Muslim world and Poland was the European gate in front of the Westernized Eurasian Tsars' Empire. Poles fought for their independence without success in their insurrections and uprisings, while Spain was submerged in endless internal conflicts throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Poland was not in the map when Spain gradually lost most of its colonial Empire. It must be also remembered that the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had also been an Empire, although not comparable to the Spanish colonial Empire, neither in terms of extension nor in terms of global political influence. In early 20<sup>th</sup> century, historically latinized Poland and Spain still shared their Catholic faith and values, what made the long distance between both countries much shorter at the psychological and cultural levels. By then, Spain was no longer a true Empire and one could argue the Iberian country, one of the former largest and most powerful Empires in history, had been a victim of US Imperialism in late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The so-called New Imperialism led to the Great War, which dissolved four powerful Empires but did not end imperialistic attitudes and foreign policies around the world. The conflicting ambitions between Austria-Hungary and Russia, boosted in 1878 by the void left in the Balkans by the generally regarded as "the sick man of Europe", the Ottoman Empire, generated a clash that eventually led to a global war, including an armed conflict between two of Poland's partitioning empires against the other, what led to the creation of a new, independent, Poland.

Poland was reborn by the end of the Great War, due to the disintegration of the Three Empires that had absorbed and partitioned it, and that had oppressed Poles since late 18th century. However, Poland's rebirth occurred at the cost of a fratricide between Poles in the armies of the three partitioning Powers, and at the cost of the destruction and misery the battles of the Eastern Front generated in the Polish lands. Poles saw how the war between her Partitioning Empires they had awaited finally arrived, awakening the Polish question, and eventually giving them even more freedom they could have initially expected. Józef Piłsudski's heroic or mythical figure certainly as the Polish leader that used the long awaited opportunity to liberate Poland, generated quite an interest among Spain's diplomats, intellectuals and press contributors as it will be detailed below in this dissertation.

Spain, because of being a neutral country during the war, did not take part in the negotiations and signature of the Treaty of Versailles. Spain had no official direct impact on the shape of the reborn Poland. In fact, Spain, while most of Europe committed a civilizational suicide in the fronts, rather focused on internal affairs, still attempted to regenerate its monarchical restoration system and fight caciquism by means of the new generation of politicians and intellectuals born in the 1880s, the young king Alfonso XIII and the *regeneracionismo* (pro-regeneration) movement<sup>29</sup>. Moreover, Spain also experienced a period of social unrest during the international conflict, especially in 1917 with its general strike, that led to a “system crisis”<sup>30</sup>. A clear proof of the progressing decomposition of the Spanish Restoration system was the murder of the president of Spain’s Minister Council, conservative Eduardo Dato on March 8, 1921 in hands of anarchists (almost coinciding in the calendar with the closing timeframe of the researched period in this project). In fact, it can be stated that during this project’s examined period Poland came back to life as a state and struggled to consolidate this state and give it the ambitioned borders, while in Spain the Restoration monarchical political system suffered an important erosion. The two countries were in completely different situations and trends, although neither of them could enjoy true political stability during this project’s examined period.

Spain had not played an important role in the international arena in the years preceding the war, except for the Moroccan crisis and the resulting 1906 Algeciras Treaty<sup>31</sup>. What is clear is that the Iberian country was in this period closer to the Entente, as the 1907 Cartagena agreement with England and France can confirm<sup>32</sup>. Spain’s neutrality in the Great War was in practice not an option but an obligation, due to the country’s weak strategic and military position and lack of resources<sup>33</sup>. However, neutrality was more strongly advocated by

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<sup>29</sup> Regeneracionismo: Spanish political movement in late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century boosted as a result of the 1898 defeat in the Spanish-North American war. It aimed at changing and modernizing Spain by means of reforms in politics, economy and education. Aragon-born politician Joaquin Costa was the movements’ main leader.

<sup>30</sup> T. Miłkowski, P. Machcewicz, *Historia Hiszpanii*, Wrocław 2009, p. 287-290; S. Juliá, *Una monarquía liberal que termina en dictadura militar 1899-1930*, J. Valdeón, J. Pérez, S. Juliá, *Historia de España*. Madrid 2006, p. 445-461.

<sup>31</sup> F. J. Romero Salvadó, *Spain and the First World War: Neutrality and Crisis*, London 1994, p. 15.

<sup>32</sup> J. Ponce Marrero, *España en la Primera Guerra Mundial: política exterior, neutralidad y algunos apuntes sobre Canarias*, [in:] *XXI Coloquio de Historia Canario-Americana*, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria 2016, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> J. C. Pereira, *España y la Primera Guerra Mundial: una neutralidad impotente*; [in:] *Los orígenes del derecho internacional contemporáneo: estudios conmemorativos del Centenario de la Primera Guerra Mundial*, coord. Yolanda Gamarra Chopo, Carlos R. Fernández Liesa, Zaragoza 2015, p.275-280; J. Ponce Marrero, *op. cit.*, p. 1-3.

Germanophile politicians and journalists than by *aliadófilos* (pro-allied) and the Spanish government was closer to the Entente since the moment when Count of Romanones took the job as Council of Ministers President in December 1915. So, within Spain's public opinion, intellectual circles, and in the press, the main debate at the beginning of the conflict was whether Spain should stay neutral, as its government had decided, or it should fight on the Entente's side<sup>34</sup>.

### The Polish Question in Spanish Politics during the Great War

Official Spanish neutrality in the Great War had a significant influence in Spain's political and institutional stands on the Polish question. In fact, neutrality was an opportunity for Spain's mediation in the conflict (something that was attempted in late 1916 by the King Alfonso XIII and Count of Romanones)<sup>35</sup>, and also an opportunity for Spain's journalists to express freely their views—despite being influenced by propaganda efforts from war sides and their supporters in Spain—on international affairs, and also on the Polish question, since they would rather not collide with the official governmental neutrality. However, Spain's neutrality brought challenges regarding the Polish question to Spanish diplomats. They had to make an effort not “offend” any of the war sides in their public and private communications with diplomats from belligerent countries.

Spain was a monarchy and, as such, was interested in the survival of European monarchies throughout the war. In the Spanish monarchy both the Allies and the Central Powers were represented. Spanish King's wife Victoria Eugenia was a member of British royalty and the King's mother and former Regent Maria Cristina was part of the Austrian Habsburg dynasty, and a sister of “polonized” Karl Stefan Habsburg from Żywiec, regarded as a candidate to the Polish throne by the Central Powers after their creation of the so-called Polish Kingdom in November 1916. Spain, due to its royal family connections, had good relations both with the British and the Austro-Hungarian monarchies, and the latter was the Partitioner of Poland with which the Spanish monarchy had the strongest ties.

The fact that Spain was a monarchy made that in the Spanish press there were many reports and comments on the topic of the Central Powers' election of a Polish King. Being

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<sup>34</sup> J. Ponce Marrero, *España en la Primera Guerra Mundial: política exterior, neutralidad y algunos apuntes sobre Canarias*, op. cit, p. 5; F. Paéz-Camino, *España ante la Primera Guerra Mundial*, “Cuaderno 87”, Madrid 2015, p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> F. J. Romero Salvadó, *Spain and the First World War: Neutrality and Crisis*, op. cit., p. 152-154.

Spain a monarchy, it is logical that in the Spanish press there was certain interest in the question of who would be appointed by the Central Powers as King of the newly created Kingdom of Poland. The names of many candidates to the new Polish throne appeared both in the foreign telegraphic press notes published by the newspapers as well as in the editors' and contributors' own comments.

In addition, 'ABC's newspaper correspondent, first in Warsaw and then Moscow and Petrograd, Sofía Casanova<sup>36</sup> claimed that Poland had "predilection" for Spain's King, Alfonso XIII<sup>37</sup>. The main reason for this claim probably was the Spanish King's actions through the Spanish European War Office, also known as the Pro-Captives Office, to rescue, to save from execution prisoners of war, or at least to put them in contact with their families<sup>38</sup>. For instance, Jewish Polish pianist Arthur Rubinstein, who obtained a Spanish passport thanks to this office<sup>39</sup> and, on the other hand, several Poles from the Austrian and German partitions living France before the war, were hosted by neutral Spain when the conflict began, and later these Poles created the main pro-Polish cause group in Spain<sup>40</sup>.

In relation to the Pro-Captives office created by the Spanish King, however, in April 1918 (on an article in fact published on 'ABC' on June 24, 1918) Sofía Casanova explained to her readers that, by means of a letter, she personally had requested Spanish king Alfonso XIII, taking into account his good actions during the conflict [by means of the Pro-Captives Office], to intercede in front of Russia, in order to repatriate the thousands of Poles that were there in exile since the 1915 evacuation. Nonetheless, Casanova explained that six months after her request nothing had happened, and that nothing happened either when Russian Catholic bishops asked the Vatican for help<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> 1861-1958 Spanish writer. The most prolific press author in Polish affairs during the dissertation's examined period. Spanish correspondent in Poland and Russia during the Great War, the Interwar period and through World War II. She wrote in the examined period mostly for ABC. <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/35429-sofia-guadalupe-perez-casanova> [accessed 15.06.2023]. Polish historian Jan S. Ciechanowski and Spanish historian Cristina González Caizán have explored part of Sofía Casanova's press articles published during this project's researched period. See: C. González Caizán, J.S. Ciechanowski, *Wojna polsko-rosyjska z lat 1919-1920 w korespondencjach Sofii Casanovy dla madryckiego dziennika "ABC"*, [in:] *O niepodległą. Kierunek północno-wschodni (1920)*, red. D. Maksimiuk, Białystok 2022, p. 19-33.

<sup>37</sup> "ABC en Rusia. Polonia, problema internacional", 'ABC', 2.12.1915, p. 3-6.

<sup>38</sup> Spain's public TV documentary on the pro-Captive office <https://www.rtve.es/play/videos/paisajes-de-la-historia/paisajes-historia-alfonso-xiii-redentor-cautivos/636603/> [accessed 20.07.2021]

<sup>39</sup> 'Revista Española de Defensa', año 27, número 310, Ministerio de Defensa, Madrid October 2014.

<sup>40</sup> Among others, Polish author Beata Lentas writes about the Polish community in Spain during and after the Great War in: B. Lentas, *Tadeusz Peiper w Hiszpanii*, Warszawa 2011.

<sup>41</sup> "ABC en Rusia, La repatriación", 'ABC', 24.06.1918, p. 3.

However, as seen in the press sources that this dissertation has examined, it occurs that Spain's King Alfonso XIII made a donation of 10.000 pesetas (according to the calculator [measuringworth.com](http://measuringworth.com), this would equal the value of 34,978.90 euros in the year 2020) for a 1915 charity campaign in Spain in favour of Poland (organised by a Spanish aristocratic lady, the widow Duchess of Sotomayor) and was the largest donor of the campaign at the moment this was reported in the press<sup>42</sup>. Furthermore, various examined press sources refer to Spanish King Alfonso XIII having said that "I'll give for the Poles as much I have for the Belgians. This is what the Holy father has taught us"<sup>43</sup>. Precisely, in the Spanish press we find many references to charity initiatives within Spanish society to help Poland, particularly in the first years of the war, when the Eastern Front was active in the Polish lands. The Spanish Catholic Church and Spaniards' Christian faith were no doubt a trigger for Spanish charity towards Poland. 'ABC's Germanophile contributor Domingo Tejera de Quesada (who used the pseudonym R. Schneider)<sup>44</sup> claimed that Spaniards, as true Catholics, should follow the example of the Pope Benedict XV, who decided to dedicate funds from the Saint Peter alms to Poland, given the tough situation in the country<sup>45</sup>.

As far as it concerns Spanish politicians' views on the Polish question, firstly, one should focus on Count of Romanones, President of the Council of Ministers from December 1915 to April 1917, and from December 1918 to April 1919. He was a convinced and publicly known Francophile, who at the very beginning of the war positioned himself in favour of Spain's intervention on the allied side<sup>46</sup>. On the other hand, he was very much in favour of Poland's political freedom (at least by the end of the war). On April 10, 1919 the Polish National Committee's representative in Spain (and former Austria-Hungary's military attaché in Madrid), Count Aleksander Dzieduszycki, sent a report to the political department of the Polish National Committee in Paris about the Spanish politicians' stand on the Polish question, and referred to Romanones' views on Poland. About the then President of the Ministers Council, Dzieduszycki claimed that "several times he has expressed his sympathy for Poland" and the Polish diplomat understood that under the Romanones government there would not be any problem for the new Polish state to obtain the recognition by the Kingdom of Spain. The

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<sup>42</sup> "La suscripción en favor de Polonia", 'La Época', 19.04.1915, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup> "Mirando a la guerra, a las almas buenas", 'ABC', 13.04.1915, p. 7-8.

<sup>44</sup> 1881-1944. Canarian traditionalist journalist, who developed his career mostly in Sevilla and Madrid <https://elcorreoweb.es/sevilla/recuerdo-de-domingo-tejera-de-quesada-periodista-GN2438833> [accessed 8.06.2023]

<sup>45</sup> "Mirando a la guerra, a las almas buenas", 'ABC', 13.04.1915, p. 7-8.

<sup>46</sup> F. Páez-Camino, *España ante la Primera Guerra Mundial*, "Cuaderno 87", UMER, Madrid 2015, p. 4.

former Austro-Hungarian officer also reported that the Spanish prime minister “would make an effort to make everything what would be in its hands” to materialize such a Spanish recognition of Poland. In addition, Dzieduszycki explained that Romanones, in a conversation with a trustable person whose name the Polish diplomat could not reveal, claimed that “if Poles do not obtain Gdansk, there cannot be any talks about freedom and justice”. If this was not enough, the Polish representative in Madrid made a reference to the letter sent by Romanones to the soon-to-be chancellor of Spain’s legation in Warsaw (since August 1919 as an honorary chancellor, and since March 1920 already as the official chancellor of the Legation<sup>47</sup>), young Polish-Spanish aristocrat, businessman, writer and advocate of Polishness and the Polish cause in Spain, Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda, which the latter included as a handwritten “letter-autograph” in his book<sup>48</sup>, published in April 1919: *Polonia: Su gloria en el pasado, su martirio y su resurrección*<sup>49</sup>.

In his report, Dzieduszycki included two fragments of Romanones’ letter inserted as sort of a prologue on Granzow’s book. In his text, the Spanish statesman regarded the fact that Poland would obtain its national freedom both as “deserved” and as a question of almost divine justice:

“Poland, the name that evokes the image of the days of youth in those who are already descending from the path of life, means a domesticated, disinherited and torn by the injustice homeland of the strongest. Poland-Poor Poland, as has been said for so many years, is today a witness to the fulfilment of the eternal law of the justice of things, the basis of all humanity”<sup>50</sup>.

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<sup>47</sup> <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/20675-casimiro-florencio-granzow-y-de-la-cerda> [accessed 2.04.2023].

<sup>48</sup> Granzów de la Cerda’s was not the only book published on the Polish question in Spain in 1919. Polish archeologist and ethnographic then residing in Madrid Eugeniusz Frankowski published a 37-page book titled “Poland and its mission in Europe” based on a lecture with the same title given in the Span’s Royal Geographical Society by him on May 5, 1919. See: E. Frankowski, *Polonia y su misión en Europa*, Madrid 1919. References to the book are made later in this work.

<sup>49</sup> C. Granzów de la Cerda, *Polonia: Su gloria en el pasado, su martirio y su resurrección*, San Sebastián 1919.

<sup>50</sup> *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1919 styczeń-maj*, red. Sławomir Dębski, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 2016, d. 265, p. 615; It is also seen handwritten before the prologue of the book: C. Granzów de la Cerda, *Polonia: Su gloria en el pasado, su martirio y su resurrección*, Editorial y Prensa, San Sebastián 1919. Original quoted text: “Polska! to imię wywołując obraz dni młodości u tych, co schodzić już zaczynają ze ścieżki żywota, oznacza Ojczyznę ujarzmioną, wydziedziczoną i rozdartą przez niesprawiedliwość silniejszego. Polska – biedna Polska, jak mówiono tyle lat – jest dziś świadkiem spełnienia się wiecznego prawa sprawiedliwości rzeczy, podstawy całej ludzkości”.

“His suffering lasted a long time, even his hope faded, but the eternal law has come true and today Poland sees a reborn and recognized humanity... How much pain and sorrow how much it cost to achieve this triumph... These victims were right. Because living without justice is not worth it”<sup>51</sup>.

One should wonder what contacts, probably among aristocrats, and networking methods, a relatively young and unknown Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda, who was not yet working for Spain’s State Minister, used to access the very President of the Ministry Council of Spain and former State Minister and convince him to contribute with a handwritten text to Granzów’s book about Poland. This could lead to another line of research for a future scientific article on the topic.

Regarding views on Poland across Spanish politics, the Polish provisional representative, in reality of the Polish National Committee, in Madrid, also came up with the conclusion that “the interest of Spanish politicians in the Polish question was not awakened until the decisive phase”. In this sense, Dzieduszyck highlighted that until recently “none of the Spanish statesmen did pronounce about the Polish question”, even though he also clarified, what is more important in this analysis, that “among them [the Spanish statesmen], we find many favourable [to Polish interests] and certainly none opposed”. Most likely, by “decisive phase”, the former Austro-Hungarian military attaché in Madrid referred to autumn 1918. Although the interest in the Polish question in the Spanish press is seen from the beginning of the war, with a substantial increase after the German conquest of Russian Poland and the November 5 Proclamation, there are no sources indicating that the Polish question placed an important role in Spanish politics, despite the November 5 Proclamation being on the agenda of the November 9, 1916 Ministers’ Council. In addition, Dzieduszycki highlighted that the then Homeland Minister Amalio Gimeno was a “great protector of the Poles”. It is worth mentioning that Gimeno was Ministry of State in November 1916 when the Central Powers announced the creation of a Polish Kingdom. Below, in the November 5 Proclamation section of this first chapter, a reference is made to Gimeno’s words about Spain’s stand on this proclamation, upon State Ministry having been asked by Russian ambassador in Spain about Spain’s diplomatic reaction to the Central Powers’ proclamation about Poland’s future.

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, Original quoted text: „Cierpienie jej trwało długo, nawet nadzieja jej nikła, lecz wieczne prawo się spełniło i dzisiaj Polska widzi się odrodzoną i uznaną pośród ludzkości... Ile bólu i smutku, ile łez trzeba było, by osiągnęła ten tryumf... Lecz cel tych ofiar był słuszny. Bowiem życie bez sprawiedliwości nie warte jest przeżycia”.

In addition, regarding conservative politician Eduardo Dato, President of the Ministers Council from October 1913 to December 1915, Dzieduszycki assured that Dato's views on the Polish question "were not different from those of the Count of Romanones", after having spoken with him a few days earlier, and the Polish diplomat added that Poles could count on Dato's support. About Antonio Maura<sup>52</sup> and the liberals, the Polish diplomat did not know their opinion about Poland's national aspirations. However, in this regard, Aleksander Dzieduszycki claimed that: "We count among the Maurists, as well as among the liberals, with serious advocates [of the Polish cause]"<sup>53</sup>.

Two references to Poland in Spain's Congress and Senate by the end of the Great War are found on the examined Spanish press sources. On November 5, 1918, 'La Época' published the session diary of the Senate and quoted senator Victor Pradera<sup>54</sup> saying: "the nations that discuss the international things on the parliaments are manoeuvred. And in Spain's case it would [manoeuvred] by the pound, the franc by the dollar, a defeated nation can stand up: for a manoeuvred nation there is no other destiny than Poland's"<sup>55</sup>. In addition, on November 13, 1918, as also reported by 'La Época', congressman Joaquín de Arteaga y Echague, Duke of Infantado,<sup>56</sup> on that day's Congress session argued that "the Catholic Belgium and Catholic Poland have got out from the war as winners"<sup>57</sup>. It can be interpreted that Pradera did not see Poland as a free nation but rather as a nation dependant on other countries' will, whereas the Duke of Infantado stated Poland was one of the war winners, without giving further details.

In summary, relying on Dzieduszycki's analysis of the leading Spanish politicians' stands on the Polish question, it can be argued that Spanish politicians were in favour of a political solution for Poland as a result of the war. However, the Polish question was not a

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<sup>52</sup> Reformist and conservative political leader in the Restoration political system. During the researched period, Maura was president of Spain's Council of Ministers from March 23, 1918 to November 9, 1918 and from April 15, 1919 to July 19, 1919. Source: Spain's Royal Academy of History <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/29034>.

<sup>53</sup> *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1919 styczeń-maj*, red. Sławomir Dębski, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 2016, d. 265, p. 615.

<sup>54</sup> Victor Pradera y Larumbe (1872-1836): Congressman and senator. Spanish traditionalist and Carlist politician born in Pamplona but mostly linked to San Sebastián.

<sup>55</sup> "Senado, sesión del día 5 de noviembre 1918", 'La Época', 5.11.1918, p. 3. Original quoted text: "Los pueblos que discuten las cosas internacionales en los Parlamentos, están maniobrados. Y España lo sería por la libra, por el franco, por el dólar. Un pueblo vencido, se puede levantar: para un pueblo maniobrado, no hay otro destino que el de Polonia".

<sup>56</sup> Joaquín Ignacio de Arteaga y Echague Silva y Méndez de Vigo, Monarchist, conservative politician. <https://dbe.rah.es/biografias/8178/joaquin-ignacio-de-arteaga-y-echague-silva-y-mendez-de-vigo>

<sup>57</sup> "Congreso, sesión del 13 de noviembre de 1918", 'La Época', 13.11.1918, p. 3. Original quoted words: "de la guerra han salido triunfantes la católica Bélgica y la católica Polonia"



priority in Spanish politics. It was not a particular priority for the Spanish government either, despite the November 5 Proclamation having been included it on the agenda of the November, 9, 1916 Council of Ministers, as it will be explained below in this dissertation.

## The Polish Question in Spain's press and the Spanish Great War correspondents in the Polish Lands

The Polish question had a lot of attention in the Spanish press since the beginning of the war but this focus on Polish affairs especially increased after the Central Powers' occupation of Russian Poland in the summer of 1915, and increased even more after the November 5 Proclamation.

In addition, the existing polarization in the Spanish press during the Great War between pro-Central Powers (*germanófilos*) and Pro-Entente (*aliadófilos*) journalists, correspondents and contributors had an enormous impact on the Spanish newspapers' comments about the Polish question. The anti-Russian attitudes of Germanophile press contributors and the anti-German attitude of pro-Entente press contributors is clearly seen in most of the articles these contributors published that directly or indirectly regarded the Polish question, and very often Polish affairs were analysed from the point of view of the clash between the Great Powers in conflict, rather than from a Poland-focused point of view.

The most important Spanish correspondents covering the Eastern Front or referring to the Polish question during the Great War were all writing for the same newspaper, editorially conservative and Germanophile 'ABC': Sofía Casanova reported from Warsaw, where she already lived when the war started, and from Petrograd after the summer 1915 evacuation caused by German-Austrian occupation of Russian Poland. Javier Bueno (using the pseudonym Antonio Azpeitua) who was 'ABC's war correspondent in Germany but also travelled to the Polish and Ukrainian lands. 'ABC's Juan Pujol travelled to the Polish lands, and was as well correspondent in London and correspondent in Paris for the conservative newspaper during the conflict. Demetrio Kobinoff, about whom I have not been able to find out any background information, also wrote chronicles from the Eastern front, some of them referring to the Polish question.

This way, predominantly Germanophile 'ABC' (including contributors with non-Germanophile views) was the Spanish newspaper with the largest coverage of the Polish question and the war's eastern front in site. Sofía Casanova was in Poland until the German

occupation, reported from her trip to Russia and from Petrograd on the Polish question for around three years and returned to Warsaw in 1918. Javier Bueno was one of the foreign journalists present in Warsaw's Royal Castle on November 5, 1916, during the German-Austrian proclamation of a Polish kingdom and he travelled to Poland and Ukraine in 1918 as well. The second newspaper that most often dedicated pages to the Polish question throughout the Great War period was clearly pro-allied 'La Correspondencia de España'.

Outside 'ABC', only Barcelona-based newspaper 'La Vanguardia' sent a correspondent, Enrique Dominguez Rodiño, and who was also in Warsaw, to the Polish lands, where the Eastern Front war action took place. Only in two of his articles from the Eastern Front he referred to the Polish question (these have not been taken into account in this thesis because of 'La Vanguardia' not being among the selected press sources and mainly because these texts did not add value to the research). On the other examined newspapers, comments about the Polish question were made mainly by correspondents in Paris and London as well as commentators and columnists in Madrid.

An observation that arises from the analysis of the selected Spanish press sources is that the term 'Poland' was used in different contexts with different meanings. Certainly the word 'Poland' can be understood in different ways depending on the context in which it was used in the Spanish press, but the question is if Spanish press readers were always able to interpret correctly what the author meant by "Poland". The word 'Poland' might refer either to the Polish lands as a whole, or only to Russian Poland, the latter either in its pre-November 5 Proclamation form as (former) Congress Poland or just "the Kingdom" (from August 1915 German-occupied) or after November 5, 1916 as "Kingdom of Poland" (or Polish Kingdom)<sup>58</sup>. In addition, by "Poland", sometimes Spanish newspapers meant the Polish institutions created in the Kingdom of Poland created by the Central Powers, in most cases the Regency Council. For illustrating the different senses of the word "Poland" in the Spanish press during the war, it is worth mentioning that in a text published on August 26, 1918 on Germanophile newspaper 'La Acción' we read: "it is assured that Poland has requested Berlin and Vienna Poland's and Galicia's totality, direct borders between Poland and Russia and Poland's access to the sea"<sup>59</sup>. The first "Poland" in the sentence means the Regency Council, the second one means former

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<sup>58</sup> "Al llegar la paz", 'El Debate', 12.03.1918, p. 3.

<sup>59</sup> "Noticias de interés, integridad", 'La Acción', 26.08.1918, p. 3.

Russian Poland and the third and fourth mentions of Poland in the sentence refer to the result of joining former Russian Poland and Galicia in the new Polish kingdom.

Many comparisons and analogies between Poland and Spain were featured in the pages of the Spanish press during the Great War period. Many of them had a historical character. For instance, on March 12, 1918 'El Debate' compared the restoration of the Polish state with the Middle Ages Christian 'Reconquista' against the Moorish Muslims in Spain<sup>60</sup>.

What is also significant is that dozens of references to Polish history are seen in the examined press sources of the Great War period, from the Middle Ages to the times of partitioned Poland, being the latter the period the most described. The most often mentioned Polish historical character in the Great War period in the Spanish press was no doubt Tadeusz Kościuszko. Even a text signed by Kościuszko was published, in which the real author imagined how the Polish hero would react from Heaven to the news of the Great Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich's manifesto to the Poles<sup>61</sup>.

Onto another matter, Polish women were also mentioned in the Spanish press. For instance, Casanova, referring to a group of Polish women in a hamlet near Łomża, living next to a Russian *pope*, stated: "there is no sacrifice about which these strong Catholic Polish women complain, waiting for the promise by the Great Duke Nicholas, from which Poland expects its salvation, to become law and justice"<sup>62</sup>.

In order to complete an introduction to the Polish question in the Spanish press one should mention, apart from Sofía Casanova's texts from Warsaw, Łomża and Petrograd (covered in other sections of this first chapter), the chronicles sent to 'ABC' by correspondent Juan Pujol Martínez<sup>63</sup> from the Eastern Front in Galicia in 1915. Juan Pujol first reported on his stay in Cracow with two other foreign correspondents, after arriving in the former Polish capital with German officers. About the impressions left by the city, he claimed: "and the buildings in Cracow give the impression of a saddened city, overwhelmed by the past rather than being restless because of the dangers of the current fight". He described the buildings as "old" and "abandoned" and he added " there are many Austrian and German officers, the latter

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<sup>60</sup> "Al llegar la paz. La Restauración de Polonia", 'El Debate', 12.03.1918, p. 3.

<sup>61</sup> "Despachos del Otro Mundo", 'El Imparcial', 18.08.1914, p. 1.

<sup>62</sup> "ABC en Polonia, desde las posiciones del Naref", "ABC", 24.06.1915, p. 3. Original quoted text: "No hay sacrificio del que se quejen estas fuertes católicas polacas, esperando que se hagan ley y justicia las promesas del Gran Duque Nicolás, de las que espera su salvación Polonia".

<sup>63</sup> 1883-1967. Spanish writer and poet, war correspondent. Politician during the Second Republic. Active supporter of Franquismo. <http://archivo.rae.es/pujol-martinez-juan-1883-1967> [accessed 22.06.2023]

in transit, the Austrians seem to be more flexible and common, less rigid than the Germans". He also described the looks of the bearded Jews and claimed "Poland is full of Jews". Pujol reported his visit to Wawel Hill with two other foreign correspondents. He accounted his conversation, Cathedral in which the Polish question was deeply addressed, with a clerk of the Wawel<sup>64</sup>. Next, in his chronicles for 'ABC' published in June 1915, Juan Pujol reported on his trip around the Galician front. Pujol described his trip from Cracow to "Neu Sandec" [Nowy Sącz], Myślenice and Limanowa as well as Tarnów, Gorlice, Jasło and Przemyśl to check places that were affected by the front, along with other foreign correspondents and captain Kliewer, in three cars provided by the Austrian military governor of Cracow. He was surprised by the fact that many cow herds were still left in Austrian Poland, despite the war. He reported seeing many Jews, and the Poles having a long hair, in Limanowa<sup>65</sup>. From Cracow Pujol also wrote that "soldiers [from Galicia] are a bit similar to Spaniards because they are brown skinned and they have a tendency to compliment the beautiful female travellers that lean out of windows"<sup>66</sup>. The Spanish correspondent added that "Polish countryside peasant women wear very brightly coloured dresses, red skirts, or crimson green, yellow, blue, and those bodices that are only seen

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<sup>64</sup> "ABC en la Guerra III. Cracovia", 'ABC,' 8.06.1915, p. 3-5. The conversation between Pujol and the Wawel Cathedral sacristan went as follows:

"Would you like to see the tombs of the Polish kings?-a parish clerk asks us. We go down to the whitewashed crypts were lie the poor bones of these monarchs that were, of those kings of a kingdom which no longer exists. Above Sobieski's tomb there is a flower crown, still fresh.

-Who has placed them[the flowers] there? we ask.

-The Polish nationalists. Cracow is the centre of the Polish nationalist movement. Here are all the propagating the movement in Russia and Germany.

-Does the Austrian government allow it?

Yes. Because it is more tolerant. You should see, even the names in the streets are written in Polish and not in German. In payment for this tolerance Poles fight for Austria against Russia.

-The Austrian Poles, of course-I say.

-No, no, the Russian Poles, those that form the Polish legion, in which feature many young poets, journalists, novelists of the new generation, born under the domain of Russia. The Poles of Austria form in the ranks of the regular Austrian army, naturally. The Polish legion, which fights under Austrian flag, is constituted by Poles of Russian nationality.

-This is very interesting. And I would like to know what the intellectuals in my country, so outraged against the "Austrian despotism" and so enthusiastic about the Russians, would say to these Polish intellectuals who, having been born in Russia, fight against her in favour of Austria"

Pujol also described the "resigned sadness of this Royal Castle , asylum of past glories". Pujol described the scene of a religious celebration in Wawel cathedral, full of religious fervour and mentioned the faithful singing Santa Maria, and quoted his colleague correspondent Negruzzi, standing next to him, saying at that moment . "this is all it remains from a great kingdom".

<sup>65</sup> "ABC en la guerra, IV.Caminos de Polonia", 'ABC', 9.06.1915, p. 3.

<sup>66</sup> "ABC en la guerra II", 'ABC', 7.06.1915, p.4. Original quoted text: "[...] soldados, que se asemejan un tanto a los españoles en el tipo moreno y en cierta propensión a piropear a las viajeras guapas que se asoman a las ventanillas".

in Spain when the theatre showgirls dress up as villagers”<sup>67</sup>. About his stay in Tarnów, Juan Pujol, after confirming this fact with a German Red cross nun in the city, stated that the three-month Russian occupation of the city did not generate great damage there, and regarding his impression of the town, he claimed: “Tarnów looks like certain Spanish mining towns in the basin of Cartagena or Bilbao, in the middle of the ramshackle houses there are some buildings built with some decorative concerns[...]”<sup>68</sup>. Juan Pujol also visited an Austrian soldiers’ cemetery in Łużna, near Gorlice and there he picked a letter out of a bunch of letters next to a tomb, being this letter written in Polish and sent by a Polish woman called Maryja<sup>69</sup>. Juan Pujol reported on the continuation of his trip in Galicia and explained that he saw the Krosno oil exploitations in fire after the Russians abandoned the area. Near Krosno, to his surprise, he saw both Mackensen and the German Kaiser Wilhelm II in person in the same place, both greeting Pujol and the other reporters. Pujol explained that recovering the Krosno oil fields was important for Germany and “a big loss” for the Allies, because Germany would be able to use this oil for its automobiles and, above all, its submarines<sup>70</sup>. In Jasło, Pujol described an empty town with hundreds of Russian prisoners suffering from typhus<sup>71</sup>. Regarding his trip from Jasło to Przemyśl, Pujol made the following description: “today is Sunday and all the countryside paths are full of women, dressed with clear colours, who go to the Mass, or that, upon returning, kneel and pray before the virgins that are always on the side of Poland's roads”<sup>72</sup>. It is worth highlighting that ‘ABC’'s Juan Pujol referred to the Galician places he visited as “Poland”, or in some occasions as “Austrian Poland”. For instance, he wrote “Paths of Poland, which I never thought of going through, and to which I will never go back, I will never forget you”<sup>73</sup>. In addition, Pujol concluded an article about his visit to the battlefield in Przemyśl, where he look at the battlefield from a hill, by exclaiming: “to this fields of Poland, through which never we

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<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, Original quoted text: “[...] campesinas polacas, vestidas con trajes de colores muy vivos, faldas rojas o carmesíes, verdes, amarillas azules, y esos corpiños que ya solo se ven en España cuando se visten de aldeanas las coristas de los teatros”.

<sup>68</sup> “ABC en la guerra XII, Tarnow”, ‘ABC’, 17.06.1915, p. 3. Original quoted text: “Se parece Tarnowa a ciertos pueblos mineros que se ven en la cuenca de Cartagena o Bilbao, en medio del caserío destartalado hay algunos edificios construidos con alguna preocupación ornamental[...]”.

<sup>69</sup> “ABC en la guerra, horrores y tristezas”, ‘ABC’, 13.06.1915, p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> “ABC en la guerra, XIII, pasa el kaiser”, ‘ABC’, 18.06.1915, p. 8.

<sup>71</sup> “ABC en la guerra, XIV, Jaslo, la ciudad vacía”, ‘ABC’, 19.06.1915, p. 2-4.

<sup>72</sup> “ABC en la guerra, XVI, la batalla de Przemyśl”, ‘ABC’, 21.06.1915, p. 2. Original quoted text: “Hoy es domingo, y todos los senderos campesinos están llenos de mujeres vestidas de colores claros que van a misa, o que, al regreso, se arrodillan y rezan ante las vírgenes que hay siempre al margen de los caminos de Polonia”.

<sup>73</sup> “ABC en la guerra, IV, Caminos de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 9.06.1915, p. 3. Original quoted words: “¡Caminos de Polonia por los que nunca pensé aventurarme y a los que nunca he de volver, jamás podré olvidaros!”.

had imagined going through, to these battlefields where the destiny of Europe is being decided now, we do not know how to say goodbye and rather we say: see you later!”<sup>74</sup>.

Regarding the covering of the Polish question in the Spanish press during the Great War it is worth explaining that a journalistic confrontation took place on the newspaper ‘ABC’ regarding the Polish question in late 1915 and early 1916 between the contributor writing under the pseudonym ‘R. Schneider’, Domingo Tejera de Quesada and the newspaper’s correspondent in Petrograd, Spanish writer and poet Sofía Casanova, who knew Poland’s history and reality and was sentimentally very attached to the Polish nation due to his marriage with Polish intellectual Wincenty Lutosławski. Tejera was more distant from the Polish question and was well known by its Germanophile views that were very well reflected in his articles.

The confrontation started because Tejera wrote a series of four articles titled “La suerte de Polonia” (Poland’s fate) in which he tried to determine what the new Polish state should be like and what it would actually be like, in his view. In the first article, published on January 8, 1916<sup>75</sup>, he claimed that he was writing in response to two previous articles by Sofía Casanova, whom he really admired as a writer and journalist. The two Sofía Casanova’s articles to which Tejera referred were “Polonia. Un problema internacional”, published on December 2, 1915<sup>76</sup> and the second part of the same title published on December 5<sup>77</sup>. Both articles were in reality written by Casanova in October 1915 from Moscow, as it was indicated at the bottom of the texts.

On “Polonia. Un problema internacional” (part 1) Casanova argued that she had sympathy for Austria because of the common religion with Spain, the common past between both countries under the royal dynasty of the Habsburgs, and the fact that Austria gave Galician Poles political freedom in the form of autonomy<sup>78</sup>. In addition, Casanova claimed:

“the eight years that I lived in Cracow made me appreciate the wideness of life, the culture, the fertile development of arts and sciences in the autonomous Galicia, and in this city of medieval walls, of the Cathedral with Saint Stanislaw’s tomb on top of

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<sup>74</sup> “ABC en la guerra, XVI, la batalla de Przemysl”, ‘ABC’, 21.06.1915, p. 4. Original quoted text: “a estos campos de Polonia, por donde nunca habíamos imaginado pasar, a estos campos de batalla, donde el destino de Europa se está decidiendo ahora, no les sabemos decir adiós sino: ¡Hasta más ver!”

<sup>75</sup> “Intervalo de paz. La suerte de Polonia I”, ‘ABC’, 8.01.1916, p. 3-4.

<sup>76</sup> “ABC en Rusia I. Problema internacional”. ‘ABC’, 2.12.1915, p. 3-4.

<sup>77</sup> “ABC en Rusia. Problema internacional II”, ‘ABC’, 5.12.1915, p. 3-7.

<sup>78</sup> “ABC en Rusia I. Problema internacional”, ‘ABC’, 2.12.1915, p. 3-4.

the Polish Kings pantheon, which in peregrination was visited by oppressed subjects of the Kaiser and the Tsar, being jealous of their Galician brothers”<sup>79</sup>.

On “Un problema internacional II” Casanova explored Polish-Russian and Polish-German relations from a historical and cultural perspective and analysed how the war’s final result would influence the future of the Polish question. Casanova argued that, generally speaking, Poles, the same as herself, preferred a Russian-ruled solution for Poland which would include the three Partitions and would give Poles a lot of political freedom. Casanova argued this solution was better than the German one because the Germans were a major enemy and would only want to dominate the Polish lands, whereas Russia was “the minor enemy” and would liberate Poland in case of an allied victory in the war. In other words, Casanova argued that Germany’s and Austria-Hungary’s war defeat would enable the development of the Polish question, unlike a victory of the Central powers, which would subdue the Poles<sup>80</sup>.

In a similar effort to Casanova’s, in his first article entire dedicated to the Polish question, published on January 8, 1916, Domingo Tejera de Quesada (pseudonym R. Schneider) just listed a series of questions and problems that would determine the future of the Polish question’s reality. The Spanish press contributor stated that “Poland must resurge, Poland must be reborn and it is almost sure that it will be reborn”. In addition, Tejera claimed that if Germany and Austria-Hungary won the war and gave Poland its independence, it would be fair that they keep the territories taken by them from Poland in the three partitions<sup>81</sup>. In other words, the Spanish columnist was against Galicia and German Poland going back to Polish hands in case the Central Powers won the war, and he believed that an independent Poland should only consist of former Russian Poland.

On the second article of the series, published on January 21, 1916, Tejera argued that it was very difficult to set the borders of a new Polish state by using historical reasons and, in order to justify his argument, he wrote a summary of the history of the lands inhabited by Poles in East-Central Europe since ancient times until the Partitions. In his article he highlighted the historical German presence in the Baltic area, Pomerania, the region of Thorn (Toruń) and Culm

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 3. Original quoted text: “Los ocho años que viví en Cracovia hicieronme apreciar la amplitud de vida, la cultura, el desarrollo fecundísimo de las artes y las ciencias en la autónoma Galitzia, y en esa ciudad de los muros medievales, de la catedral con el sepulcro de San Estanislao sobre el Panteón de los Reyes polacos, panteón que en peregrinación, visitaban los oprimidos súbditos del Kaiser y del Zar, envidiando a sus hermanos los galitzianos”.

<sup>80</sup> “ABC en Rusia. Problema internacional II”, ‘ABC’, 5.12.1915, p. 3-7.

<sup>81</sup> “Intervalo de paz. La suerte de Polonia I”, ‘ABC’, 8.01.1916, p. 3-4. Original quoted words: “Polonia debe resurgir, Polonia debe renacer, y es casi seguro que renacerá”.

(Chełmno), and generally “between the Oder and further than the Vistula”<sup>82</sup>. Finally, addressing Sofía Casanova directly, he concluded that:

“what I have argued, generally speaking, indicates how difficult it is to draw the perimeter of the kingdom of Poland, that, if it is constituted, should take and if to this we add many questions of strategic and political nature that we will examine, Mrs. Casanova will see the need of not poisoning the mood of the audience with passionate taunts, because the Polish question can only be resolved by joining wills and it is in the Polonophiles’ best interest to sum elements from all the sectors of opinion, without aggravating any of them”<sup>83</sup>.

On the third article of the series “La Suerte de Polonia”, published on February 11, 1916, Tejera wrote a well-developed summary of Polish history since Mieszko I until the Partitions. From the summary it should be highlighted that he claimed that in Poland, unlike in Spain, the kings were not capable of restraining the power of the nobility, which was “a fence between the King and the people”. It is also interesting to see that he described the *liberum veto* as “stupid”. Tejera concluded his article arguing that Poland had been attacked by external forces for 800 years, but at the same time Poland was to blame for its own internal weaknesses. He added that Poland “contributed to seed hatred by means of its external wars, to generate retaliation and greed which caused the final partitions”<sup>84</sup>.

On the fourth part of the “La Suerte de Polonia” series Tejera focused on 18th century Poland and the political situation that led to the Partitions. He claimed that the elected king’s system couldn’t bring any good results and stated that “rather than a monarchy, Poland was a monarchic Republic”<sup>85</sup>. An interesting comparison appears in this article when Tejera claims that when the candidate to the Polish throne Stanislaw Leszczyński asked his son-in-law, the French King Louis XV for military help against a Russian troops’ incursion into Poland, “the French foresaw what they would have to do in 1915 for the Serbs and sent three regiments to

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<sup>82</sup> “Intervalo de paz. La suerte de Polonia II”, ‘ABC’, 21.01.1916, p. 3, 5.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibidem*, ‘ABC’, 21.01.1916, p. 5. Original quoted text: “Lo expuesto a grandes rasgos indica cuán difícil es trazar el perímetro que el reino de Polonia, si se constituye, habría de comprender, y si a esto se suman otras muchas otras cuestiones que examinaremos, de índole estratégica y política, verá la señora Casanova la necesidad de no envenenar el ánimo del público con dicitos apasionados, porque la cuestión polaca sólo aunando voluntades, y en interés de los polonófilos está que sumemos elementos de todos los sectores de la opinión, sin agraviar a ninguno”.

<sup>84</sup> “Mirando a la paz. La suerte de Polonia III”, ‘ABC’, 11.02.1916, p. 6-7.

<sup>85</sup> “Mirando a la paz. La suerte de Polonia IV”, ‘ABC’, 22.02.1916, p. 6.



help their comrades of the time, the Poles”. Tejera also argued that the Bar Conference’s attempt to challenge Russia failed because Russia “was favoured by the religious and political differences among the nationals [Poles], that not even in that supreme moment of danger for the homeland were able to get rid of them”<sup>86</sup>.

On the fifth and last article of the series, Tejera analysed the reality and future of the Polish question. He considered that Poland’s mission was to “make the European culture prevail in front of the eternal Muscovite threat”<sup>87</sup>. According to the Spanish commentator, Poland:

“[...]because of an excess of culture in relation with the development of the times wanted to advance towards the West, dividing against it the energies that it should have gathered to defend itself and to civilize and obtain hegemony over the East”<sup>88</sup>.

Tejera added that Poland’s interior differences and the Poles’ mistake of fighting against Germany before consolidating its domination on the East was what had condemned Poland in the past. He believed that the new state’s mission, therefore, would be to correct its errors from the past and oppose Russia, dominating her if possible. Tejera argued that Poland, in other words “the civilized Slavs”, had the chance of dominating the world when Sigmund Vasaa’s son was elected Russian Tsar and then Poland lost its chance<sup>89</sup>.

In addition, Tejera stated that an integration of a potential new Polish state into Germany was not plausible because it would not be beneficial for Germany, since Germans would not be able to Germanize Poland and Poles would successfully offer resistance to the German authority. The Spanish columnist argued that a new Polish state should have good relations with Germany, just in case it went to war with Russia. He believed that Germans would give political freedom to former Congress Poland and he personally thought that the Central Empires should keep their part of Polish lands (Poznań and Galicia respectively as mentioned by the author) if they made the effort to conquer Congress Poland to the Russians, as he had already mentioned in the first article of the series. The Spanish press contributor, claimed, however, that Austria could give Galicia to a new Polish state in case Austria gained territories in the Balkans because “the Carpathians are Austria’s natural border” in the East. Tejera also stated that maybe

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<sup>86</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>87</sup> “Mirando a la paz. La suerte de Polonia. Y V último”, ‘ABC’, 7.03.1916, p. 7.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “[...] por exceso de cultura en relación con el desenvolvimiento del tiempo y olvidando su singularidad geográfica, quiso avanzar hacia Occidente, repartiendo contra éste las energías que debió reunir para defenderse y aun para civilizar y obtener la hegemonía sobre Oriente”.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*.

Germany would give Poznań back to Poland if Germany reached the Estonian lake Pejpus. We must interpret this geopolitical idea expressed by the author as the fact that Germany and Austria would give back their own territories inhabited by Poles only if these lands were no longer borderlands because the borders had been moved further east or south due to the war developments<sup>90</sup>.

Regarding the future of conquered Congress (Russian) Poland, Domingo Tejera added that one option would be that this territory would be yielded by Germany to Austria in order to form the “Austro-Hungarian-Polish Empire”, in a reference to the trialist solution advocated by some Polish politicians. The Spanish columnist argued that this was a good political idea because Poland would fit well in such a diverse nation, but at the same time, he claimed that this solution had “dangers” because the balance between Germanic and Slavic population in the Danube Empire would be broken in favour of the Slavs.

The author added that another solution would be an “independent Poland” with “franchises” allowing it to trade through the Vistula and the port of Gdańsk. By “independent Poland” he meant only Congress Poland. What did he mean by “franchises”? Probably he had in mind the concept of what we would define as a protectorate. This concept reminds a lot of the idea of the Free City of Danzig, developed by the League of Nations four years later, along the concept of internationalization of the Vistula river that could be one of the possible interpretations of Wilson’s point 13. Finally, Tejera claimed that even another solution for the Polish problem was the creation of a “United Kingdom of Poland and part of Ukraine spreading from the Pripet to the Dniester and with access to the Black Sea” and added the Ukrainian question was an added problem that this solution could solve because the Ukrainians aimed at achieving freedom from Russia<sup>91</sup>. This idea reminds of Piłsudski’s federal view, which will be discussed below, in chapter 4 in relation to Spanish views on the Polish-Soviet War.

In regard to press confrontations in Spain regarding the Polish question during the Great War, it is also worth explaining that ‘ABC’ published on April 26, 1918 a summary of a letter to the newspaper<sup>92</sup> complaining about an article about the Polish question written by Javier Bueno (pseudonym Antonio Azpeitua). The complaint letter had been sent to the newspaper by J. Fajans, a Polish industrial and commercial businessman living in Spain who, a few months later, in the autumn of 1918, would be nominated as Poland’s trade attaché in Madrid by the

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<sup>90</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>92</sup> “Notas varias. Reclamaciones de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 26.04.1918, p. 9.

Polish community in Madrid in regard to the Polish National Committee and who was, in fact, one of the organizers of the Committee in Spain.

In the text that Fajans denounced, which can be regarded as the most and probably the only anti-Polish text in the Spanish press during the Great War, Bueno compared Poles to Germans, highlighting the former's weaknesses and the latter's strengths, all within the context of the German occupation of Congress Poland and of Polish claims in German Poland:

“To the efforts of reorganization, enlivenment, improvement of Poland's economic life made by the Germans, the Poles always opposed resistance, rebellion, hostility, instead of cooperating in the work. Always suspicion in their souls, the desire to seek a selfish interest in the action of others. In every moment the character of the race manifested, disorganizer, intriguing, incoherent and confused, incapable and pretentious”<sup>93</sup>.

Bueno added that Germans were more tolerant towards other religions than Poles and also compared both nations from an economic perspective: “with Germans there is activity, commerce intensifies, work fructifies, hygiene is a law, the number of schools is multiplying”. In addition, Bueno described Poles' character as “incoherent, turbulent, with ribbons of craziness of grandeur”. Moreover, Bueno argued that Poles did not use ethnographic and demographic claims to liberate themselves from Russian oppression as they did to claim German territories. Bueno concluded the article with a very offensive statement towards Poles:

“Poles deserved that Germans withdrew the pawned war or that would leave them to their own fate, so that the colleague Trocki would make of them what he would like to, because once more it has been proved that the nation that invented the constitutional clause that demanded unanimity to elect the King deserves to be subdued to a foreign yoke or to be a victim of its own incoherence”<sup>94</sup>.

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<sup>93</sup> “ABC en Alemania, Las reclamaciones de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 27.03.1918, p. 4. Original quoted text: “a los esfuerzos de reorganización, de vivificación, de mejoramiento de la vida económica de Polonia que hacían los alemanes, los polacos oponían resistencia, rebeldía, hostilidad, en vez de cooperar en la obra. Siempre la sospecha en sus almas, el afán de buscar un interés egoísta en la acción ajena. En todo momento se manifestaba el genio de la raza, desorganizador, intrigante, incoherente y confuso, incapaz y pretencioso”.

<sup>94</sup> “ABC en Alemania, Las reclamaciones de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 27.03.1918, p. 4. Original quoted text: “Merecían los polacos que Alemania y Austria-Hungría recogiesen la palabra empeñada o que los abandonaran a su suerte, para que el compañero Trotski hiciera de ellos lo que mejor le pareciera”. Porque se demuestra una vez más que el pueblo que inventó la cláusula constitucional que exigía la “unanimidad” para elegir Rey merece estar sometido a un yugo extranjero o ser víctima de su propia incoherencia”.

Bueno thought that Poland was in debt with the Germans. In addition, he clearly stated that, in his view, because of not going along with German desires, Poles did not deserve to be independent<sup>95</sup>. No references to German oppression of Poles during the partitions and during the occupation since 1915 appeared in his article. Moreover, it must be explained that Bueno's reference to the elections of Polish kings by unanimity can be interpreted as a satire or mock of Poland's democratic tradition. This anti-Polishness is surprising because in his articles from Warsaw on the occasion of the November 5 Proclamation (below in this work described) he did not show such an anti-Polish attitude. One could interpret that the Polish movements for liberation from the Central Powers, like the Oath Crises, made Bueno changed his stand on the Polish question since 1916.

In his letter denouncing Bueno's comments, Fajans argued that Polish claims in Silesia and Poznań were justified, and he also claimed that Germany had not liberated Poland. Fajans criticized Bueno for his description of the Polish people and his claims on the Russians giving certain freedom to the Poles. The Polish expatriate in Spain argued that the Germans were more to blame than the Russians in regard to Poland's political situation, because allegedly Germans were "a self-called cultured nation". Fajans concluded his text stating that only Austria-Hungary had given freedom to the Poles<sup>96</sup>.

Last but not least, in relation to the Polish question in the Spanish press, it must be also explained that not all references to Poland during the Great War were of a political nature. Spanish newspapers reported about an exhibition of works by Polish painters, which was organized in the headquarters of Spain's State Ministry in Madrid in April 1918 (April 5- April 21), and specifically in the patio of the building<sup>97</sup>. This has an enormous symbology and tells us about the fact that interest in Poland, and this case its arts, had increased in Spain due to the new reality brought by the war. In addition, the fact that the exhibition was hosted in the Palacio de la Santa Cruz cannot be downplayed, has an enormous significance and could be interpreted as symbolic support of Polish culture by Spain's State Ministry. Among other references in the Spanish press, it is worth remarking that on the April 18, 1918 edition of 'ABC', Jose María

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>97</sup> M. Rabajczyk, *Barcelona, Sagunto, Madryt – Drogi Polskich Artystów W Hiszpanii W Czasie Pierwszej Wojny Światowej*. [in]: „Zeszyty Naukowe Towarzystwa Doktorantów UJ Nauki Humanistyczne”, Nr 10 (1/2015), p. 81-94; p. 88.

Salaverría dedicated a two-page article to the exhibition after visiting it, but his text focused exclusively on artistic aspects and did not refer to Polish political affairs<sup>98</sup>.

### Spain's reactions to the Great Duke Nicholas's Oath to the Polish people

The so-called "Great Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich's manifesto to the Poles" was published on August 14, 1914, despite many members of the Russian government opposing it, in a moment when Russia had a good reputation among Poles in the Kingdom (Congress, Russian Poland)<sup>99</sup>. The manifesto had a big impact on the pages of the Spanish press. When trying to analyse the reactions to this political event in Spain's newspapers, firstly, it is surprising to see that quite a few Spanish press titles mistakenly claimed that the Tsar Nicolas II himself was responsible for the proclamation to the Polish people, when it was in fact his uncle the Great Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich who, at least officially, issued it. On the examined Spanish press sources it is seen that it was even written that first the Tsar had made a proclamation and then there was the manifesto by Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich. Most of the examined Spanish press titles included the full text of the proclamation in their August 1914 articles about the manifesto. Among the examined sources, the newspapers that mentioned the Tsar in relation with the manifesto, either as its main responsible or just behind it, there were neutrally-oriented 'La Época'<sup>100</sup>, pro-allied 'La Correspondencia de España'<sup>101</sup>, pro-allied 'El Heraldo de Madrid'<sup>102</sup> and allegedly neutrally-oriented (and later closer the Central Powers) but at that time closer to the Entente 'El Imparcial'<sup>103</sup>. A newspaper that initially, on August 16, did not mention the Tsar was 'ABC', even though later, on August 19, the newspaper mentioned the Tsar in relation with the August 14 oath to the Poles<sup>104</sup>. The fact the newspaper published the text of the manifesto is also remarkable, taking into account 'ABC's Germanophile orientation. Meanwhile, on August 19, 1914, 'El Liberal' featured the text of the Great Duke Nicholas's proclamation to the Poles, without mentioning the Tsar<sup>105</sup>, but on

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<sup>98</sup> "Palabras actuales. La pintura nihilista", 'ABC', 18.04.1918, p. 5-6.

<sup>99</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>100</sup> "La acción rusa. el Zar exalta a los polacos a que se unan a Rusia para reconstituir el antiguo reino de Polonia", 'La Época', 15.08.1914, p.2; "Notas de última hora", 'La Época', 15.08.1914, p. 3.

<sup>101</sup> "Documento histórico. Llamamiento a los polacos, prometiendo la autonomía", 'La Correspondencia de España', 19.08.1914, p. 2.

<sup>102</sup> "La resurrección de Polonia", 'El Heraldo de Madrid', 21.08.1914, p. 1.

<sup>103</sup> "La resurrección de Polonia", 'El Imparcial', 25.08. 1914, p. 1.

<sup>104</sup> "Rusia y Polonia", 'ABC', 16.08.1914. p.16; "¿Qué harán los polacos?, La proclama del Zar", 'ABC', 19.08.1914, p. 9.

<sup>105</sup> "La resurrección de Polonia", 'El Liberal', 19.08.1914, p. 2.

August 23 the newspaper's editors stated: "Russia is for us less antipathic, since the Tsar has committed to give the Kingdom of Poland back its freedom"<sup>106</sup>.

In a letter published on both 'La Correspondencia de España' and 'El Liberal' in December 1914, Sofía Casanova reported that it was believed that the Tsar was directly responsible for the proclamation and had transferred the oath's text to the Great Duke Mikolaevich<sup>107</sup>. However, Polish historian Tadeusz Kisielewski explains that "the initiator of the manifesto publication was Russian Foreign Minister Siergiej Sazonov and the main author of its project was the Duke Grigorij Trubecki". In addition, Kisielewski claims that "the Tsar desired to sign the appeal himself, however, the government decided that this would be a too serious and far-reaching commitment to Poles"<sup>108</sup>. Andrzej Chwalba, meanwhile, apart from Trubecki and Sazonov, also mentions Borys Nolde as one of the manifesto's initiators. He, similarly to Kisielewski, explains that most Russian ministers were against the proposed content of the manifesto, claiming that it may create unnecessary hope among Poles, and adds that finally the ministers accepted it, under the condition that it would not be signed by the Tsar. However, Chwalba does not claim the Tsar intended to sign it, as Kisielewski does. Chwalba explains that "asked by phone what he thinks about it, the Great Duke Mikołaj Mikołajewicz replied that he accepts the manifest and he can sign it"<sup>109</sup>. Historian Piotr Wandycz also highlights the fact the Tsar did not sign the proclamation<sup>110</sup>.

The most immediate critical reaction to the Great Duke's manifesto appeared on August 19, on Germanophile conservative newspaper 'ABC'. The newspaper's editors claimed that "a little bit late and in very suspicious circumstances comes this generosity"<sup>111</sup>. One of the most positive Spanish press reactions to the manifesto appeared two days later, on August 21, when 'El Heraldo de Madrid's Ramiro de Maeztu claimed that the Tsar's promise of freedom to the Poles would be fulfilled, the same way he fulfilled the promise of creating the Duma. In

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<sup>106</sup> "Dictados del buen sentido", 'El Liberal', 23.08.1914, p. 1.

<sup>107</sup> "Notas de la guerra. La primera batalla de Polonia", 'La Correspondencia de España', 7.12.1914, p. 2.

<sup>108</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, Poznań 2014, p.142. Original quoted texts: „Inicjatorem wydania odezwy wielkiego księcia był minister spraw zagranicznych Siergiej Sazonów, a głównym autorem jej projektu książę Grigorij Trubecki”; „Pragnął ją podpisać car, jednak rząd uznał, że byłoby to ze strony Rosji zbyt poważne i daleko idące zobowiązanie wobec Polaków”.

<sup>109</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, p. 188. Original quoted text: "Zapytany w rozmowie telefonicznej wielki książę Mikołaj Mikołajewicz, co o tym sadzi, odparł, że akceptuje manifest i może go podpisać”.

<sup>110</sup> P. Wandycz, *The lands of partitioned Poland, 1795-1918*, University of Washington Press, Washington 1974, p.335. See: A. Achmatowicz, *Polityka Rosji w kwestii polskiej w pierwszym roku Wielkiej Wojny 1914-1915*, Instytut Historii PAN, Warszawa 2003, p. 243-313.

<sup>111</sup> "¿Qué harán los polacos? La proclama del Zar", 'ABC', 19.08.1914, p. 9.

addition, Maeztu interpreted that there were military reasons behind the manifesto, that is that Russia wanted to ensure it had enough troops to face the attack on the German and Austrian borders<sup>112</sup>. Similarly, on August 25 ‘El Imparcial’'s contributor Vicente Vera claimed that "Poland [...] will emerge from this battle being a single one and autonomous, fulfilling the Poles' dreams after almost a century and a half of servitude and oppression"<sup>113</sup>, what we can interpret as a prediction that, by the end of the war, due to the fulfilment of the Tsar's promises, Poland would become the result of a reunion of its three partitioned parts, with a certain degree of political freedom, but under Russian patronage.

Looking at the wording in the immediate reactions of the analysed Spanish newspapers to the Great Duke's proclamation, we can see that while ‘La Época’ used the words “independence” “territorial integrity” and “kingdom [of Poland]”<sup>114</sup>, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’'s Ramiro de Maeztu used the title “The resurrection of Poland” for his article and mentioned the Tsar's promise of freedom to the Poles<sup>115</sup>. ‘El Imparcial’ also used the title “the resurrection of Poland” and wrote not only about Poland's recovery of “independence” resulting from the war, but also about the creation of a “single one and autonomous [Poland]”<sup>116</sup>. ‘La Correspondencia de España’ used the word “autonomy”, ‘El Liberal’ referred to the restored freedom of the “Kingdom of Poland”, ‘ABC’'s editors used the wording “the resurrection of Poland as a state”<sup>117</sup> even though in October 1914 ‘ABC’'s war correspondent in the eastern front Demetrio Kobinoff wrote about “an autonomy so wide, that equalled almost an independence” offered to Poles by the Russian Emperor<sup>118</sup>, and the same newspaper titled “autonomy” a press note on the topic<sup>119</sup>. So, as we can see, apart from Kobinoff, only ‘El Imparcial’ used at some point the word “independence”, and most newspapers talked about the “resurrection” and the “Polish Kingdom”. *A posteriori*, in 1915, on ‘Blanco y Negro’ (‘ABC’'s weekly) columnist Ángel Castell argued that “the Tsar of all the Russias promised her [Poland] a new regime with so much economic and administrative autonomy that from this to independence there was not more

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<sup>112</sup> “La resurrección de Polonia”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 21.08.1914, p. 1.

<sup>113</sup> “La resurrección de Polonia”, ‘El Imparcial’, 25.08.1914, p. 1. Original quoted text: “Polonia [...] va a resurgir de esta contienda una y autónoma, realizándose los sueños de los polacos después de casi siglo y medio de servidumbre y opresión”.

<sup>114</sup> “Notas de última hora”, ‘La Época’, 15.08.1914, p. 3.

<sup>115</sup> “La resurrección de Polonia”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 21.08.1914, p. 1.

<sup>116</sup> “La resurrección de Polonia”, ‘El Imparcial’, 25.08.1914, p. 1.

<sup>117</sup> “¿Qué harán los polacos? La proclama del zar”, ‘ABC’, 19.08.1914, p. 9.

<sup>118</sup> “Del campo de batalla, los rusos en Lemberg”, ‘ABC’, 16.10.1914, p. 5.

<sup>119</sup> “Las operaciones en oriente, preparando la autonomía”, ‘ABC’, 30.11.1914, p. 11.

than a step”<sup>120</sup>. In regard to this, it is worth adding that Kisielewski explains that “the word ‘autonomy’ was changed to ‘self-government’ in the final writing” of the manifesto<sup>121</sup>.

When it comes to the Spanish press views on Polish reactions to the proclamation, it is worth mentioning that on ‘ABC’'s August 19, 1914 edition, it is read that it was logical that “the resurrection of Poland as a state” generated “enthusiasm” among Poles<sup>122</sup>. A few weeks later, before becoming ‘ABC’'s correspondent in the war, on a text originally published by ‘El Liberal’, and also published by ‘La Correspondencia de España’ in November 1914, Sofía Casanova claimed that the Polish reaction to the Great Duke’s proclamation was positive.<sup>123</sup> She added:

“And however, the Great Duke Nicholas, general in chief of the Russian army proclamation returned hope to the Poles. Those historical words on August 15 shook everyone. "the moment has arrived for the dream of your parents and great parents to come true, that the dismembered Poland gets re-joined and is free in language and religion". This liberal, strong and far proclamation, which it is said the very Tsar dictated to his uncle Nicholas. These first friendly sentences that since 150 years ago the Poles hear from the muscovite Empire, cheer them up and strength and abnegation to bear the largest penalties and organize themselves in a great Committee[...]"<sup>124</sup>.

The Committee which Casanova referred to was the KNP (Polish National Committee), created in November 1914 by the pro-Russian anti-German (passivist) political movement, and was led by Alexander Wielopolski and Roman Dmowski<sup>125</sup>. Furthermore, in May 1915 Sofía Casanova claimed that “the Great Duke Nicholas promised Poles to make the dream of their elderly true, to make one Poland of the three torn Polands. This hope gives strength to Poles,

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<sup>120</sup> “Crónica de la Guerra Europea”, ‘Blanco y Negro’, 15.08.1915, p. 4.

<sup>121</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

<sup>122</sup> “¿Qué harán los polacos? La proclama del zar”, ‘ABC’, 19.08.1914, p. 9.

<sup>123</sup> “Notas de la guerra. La primera batalla de Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 7.12.1914, p. 2.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Y, sin embargo, volvió la esperanza a los polacos la proclama del Gran Duque Nicolás, general en jefe del ejército ruso. Aquellas palabras históricas que el 15 de agosto estremecieron a todos: “ha llegado el momento de que se realice el sueño de vuestros padres y vuestros abuelos: de que la despedazada Polonia se una, y libre sea su religión y su idioma”, esta liberal, fuerte y justiciera proclama, que dicen dictó a su tío Nicolás el Zar mismo. Esas primeras frases amistosas que desde hace ciento cincuenta años oyen los polacos del Imperio moscovita, les dan ánimo y fortaleza y abnegación para soportar las mayores penalidades y organizarse en un magno Comité[...].”

<sup>125</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 195.



who suffer hunger and thirst, of bread, water and justice”<sup>126</sup>. In addition, on August 22, 1914 ‘La Época’ had published and titled “Poland’s answer” a press note from Paris reporting that Polish political and social organizations that were “representative of the Polish people” positively reacted to the Russian proclamation<sup>127</sup>. In addition, on October 16, 1914, ‘ABC’'s correspondent in Russia and in the Eastern Front, Demetrio Kobinoff assured that some Austrian Poles, at the beginning of the war, after the Tsar’s proclamation, praised the Tsar and "envied the luck of Russian Poles", but many other Galician Poles were sceptic about the Russian proclamation’s offer to the Poles and were "loyal to the Austrian domination". Kobinoff also explained to his readers that those loyal Austrian Poles believed “that Russia could not mobilize its armies with the needed quickness to contain the invasion of its territory by Franz Joseph's soldiers”<sup>128</sup>. Despite their criticism of the Great Duke’s proclamation, on August 19, 1914, as already mentioned, ‘ABC’'s editors regarded its result as “the resurrection of the Polish state”<sup>129</sup>, a comment that can be described as hasty. However, on August 7, 1915 ‘El Imparcial’ did not describe such a positive reaction of the Poles to the manifesto. Despite claiming that the allied policy of self-determination was “new for Poland”, the newspaper’s editors stated that Poles did not think that Russia, after winning the war, would give them political freedom<sup>130</sup>.

It is of great significance that the Great Duke’s proclamation to the Poles had certain echoes in Spanish diplomacy for many months afterwards. On April 2, 1915 Spain’s ambassador in Petrograd, Aníbal Morillo y Pérez del Villar, Count of Cartagena, claimed that Great Duke Nicholas wanted to become King of Poland’s Kingdom, which he wanted to reconstruct, but the Spanish diplomat claimed that Nicholas’s attitude towards the Polish nation was not consistent with the proclamation. The Count of Cartagena also wrote that Russia experienced the “counterproductive result” of its Russification efforts in the Polish lands and in the Russian-occupied areas of Galicia. The Spanish diplomat also stated that “Russia, like Germany, does not know how to endear itself to the countries it dominates or aspires to dominate”. Moreover, the ambassador referred to the “inhuman” deportation of Polish nobles

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<sup>126</sup> “ABC en Varsovia. Las desdichas de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 24.05.15, p. 7. Original quoted text: “El Gran duque Nicolás prometió a los polacos realizar el sueño de sus mayores: hacer una sola Polonia de las tres desgarradas...esta esperanza da fuerza a los polacos, que sufren hambre y sed, de pan, de agua, y de justicia”.

<sup>127</sup> “La respuesta de Polonia proclama del zar”, ‘La Época’, 22.08.1914, p. 2.

<sup>128</sup> “Del campo de batalla, los rusos en Lemberg”, ‘ABC’, 16.10.1914, p. 5.

<sup>129</sup> “¿Qué harán los polacos? La proclama del Zar”, ‘ABC’, 19.08.1914, p. 9.

<sup>130</sup> “Polonia y su triste destino”, ‘El Imparcial’, 7.08.1915, p. 1.

to Siberia<sup>131</sup>. In addition, on another correspondence to Spain's State Ministry, on May 26, 1915 Count of Cartagena claimed that Russia would not fulfil its promise to the Poles, even if it won the war, and would not give them freedom. The Spanish ambassador criticised the way the Great Duke dealt with the Polish question and with Polish aristocrats, in his opinion, by using "bad faith". Moreover, the Spanish diplomat claimed: "I have myself heard the Russian Foreign Ministry say that Poles are unable to rule to govern themselves"<sup>132</sup>.

Likewise, in the Spanish press the reactions to the Great Duke's proclamation extended almost until the end of the war. Around a year after the proclamation, 'ABC's readers could think that the Great Duke's promise was seriously intended if on August 8, 1915 they read the chronicle written by 'ABC's correspondent in Petrograd, Kobinoff, reporting that Russian prime minister addressed the Polish question in the Duma. The Spanish newspaper's correspondent quoted Ivan Goremkyn saying that a law project about Poland in line with the Great Duke's promises was being submitted to Parliament. In addition, 'ABC's Kobinoff reported that Goremkyn's speech was applauded by the Duma<sup>133</sup>. Also in August 1915, 'El Imparcial' mentioned the message by Great Duke Nicholas to the Poles describing it as the offer of "a new political organization". 'El Imparcial' argued that: "the Great Duke's policy, respected by the Tsar, obeyed not only to a conservation instinct, but to the agreement with the other allies, which since the beginning of the war declared themselves advocates of the principle of nationalities"<sup>134</sup>. Thus, 'El Imparcial' interpreted that the Great Duke's manifesto to give Poland political freedom was caused by Russia's alliance with France and England, and by the fact that these Western powers advocated the principle of nationalities to be applied to small

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<sup>131</sup> Archivo Histórico Nacional, Exteriores, H2993, 2.04.1916. Spain's ambassador in Petrograd Aníbal Morillo y Pérez del Villar, Count of Cartagena, to Spain's State Minister Count of Romanones Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres. Original quoted words: "Rusia, como Alemania, no sabe hacerse querer en los países que domina o aspiran a dominar".

<sup>132</sup> AHN, H2993, 26.05.1916. Spain's ambassador in Petrograd, Aníbal Morillo y Pérez del Villar, Count of Cartagena, to Spain's State Minister Amalio Gimeno y Cabañas.

<sup>133</sup> "En el frente austro-italiano, prisioneros rusos", 'ABC', 12.08.1915, p. 7. The quoted text by 'ABC's Kobinoff, corresponding to Goremkyn's words in the Duma was the following: "when the war started, the generalissimo Great Duke Nicholas announced to the suffered Poland on a proclamation the decided plan by the Emperor to concede her an autonomous reign, which under the Empire's sceptre would allow the Polish people to develop its interests and cultivate its traditions, its beliefs and its own initiatives. Those words were not an old promise. His majesty asked his government to study and write the corresponding law project, and this study and this project are on the table submitted to your deliberation. Please examine the situation of the Empire for what the Ministers of War, Navy and Foreign Affairs will tell you, and to agreements you reach add the one about the concession to Poland of the rights she is entitled to because of her loyalty and heroism".

<sup>134</sup> "Polonia y su triste destino", 'El Imparcial', 7.08.1915, p. 1. Original quoted text: "Obecedería la política del gran duque, respetada por el zar, no sólo al instinto de conservación, sino al acuerdo con los demás aliados, que desde el comienzo de la guerra se declararon defensores del principio de las nacionalidades".

nations claiming their sovereignty. In relation to this last idea, in February 1917 'El Heraldo de Madrid's José Pablo Rivas argued that "the proclamation by the Tsar to Poland" was an example that, under the allied views, the independence or freedom of small nationalities was not opposed to their [Entente] power, wealthiness and imperial domination, neither to their future imperialist strategy<sup>135</sup>. However, Sofía Casanova did not assess the Entente's influence on Russia so positively, and on February 28, 1916, criticized that France only perceived the Polish question as an internal Russian issue, and it did not try to influence Russia to give Poland political freedom, especially after taking into consideration the Great Duke Nicholas's manifesto<sup>136</sup>.

From 1915 onwards, many comments on this question in the examined Spanish press sources, focused on the fact that, due to the war situation, in the Eastern Front, with the Polish lands increasingly under Central Powers' control, Russia could not fulfil its promise to the Poles to unite the Polish lands. In most of these comments there was from scepticism about Russia fulfilling its promise to the Poles to certainty that Russia would never fulfil its promise. For instance, on August 6, 1915 'La Época's Mariano Marfil regarded the fact that first Poles were promised by Duke Nicholas an autonomy of all the Polish lands united, but then Germany occupied most of Russian Poland, preventing the Russian promise to the Poles from being fulfillable, as a disgrace. The author wondered if the Powers in war would remember to fulfil their promises to Poland once the war was over, and concluded that the Great Duke Nicholas's proclamation a year earlier was already forgotten, and no longer made any sense, because of Poland suffering the horrors of the war<sup>137</sup>. In addition, in September 1916 'El Debate's Francisco Martín Llorente (under the pseudonym Armando Guerra) mocked the fact that Russia prepared a Tsar-approved document to grant Poland autonomy "to be applied when the region will be free of enemies"<sup>138</sup>. On June 13, 1915 'ABC's correspondent in Germany Javier Bueno stated: "the enemy invades immense territories of this Poland that the Tsar prematurely promised to emancipate"<sup>139</sup>. Some of these comments also focused on the lack of action or gestures by Russia towards Poland. On January 9, 1917 'El Imparcial's correspondent in London, Salvador de Madariaga<sup>140</sup>, argued that the Russian government did not put the promise

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<sup>135</sup> "Las pequeñas nacionalidades", 'El Heraldo de Madrid', 11.02.1917, p. 1.

<sup>136</sup> "ABC en Rusia. El sacrificio de los débiles", 'ABC', 28.02.1916, p. 3.

<sup>137</sup> "Problemas de la guerra. La cuestión polaca", 'La Época', 6.08.1916, p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> "La situación militar. En los demás frentes". 'El Debate', 25.09.1916, p. 1.

<sup>139</sup> "ABC en Berlin. Los desengaños del zar", 'ABC', 13.06.1915, p. 5.

<sup>140</sup> 1886-1978. Diplomat, liberal pro-allied politician, during the Great War contributor to 'the Times', correspondent for 'El Imparcial' and 'España'. Internationalist and one of the fathers of the future EU project.

made by the Great Duke to the Poles in 1914 into action, “despite the advice of professor [Pavel] Milyakof [Milyukov], chief of the constitutional democrats”<sup>141</sup>. However, in February 1917 Germanophile newspaper ‘La Acción’ reported that “the Tsar has ordered the creation of a commission that elaborates the bases for the future political organization of free Poland and its relations with the Empire”<sup>142</sup>, meaning a follow up on the proclamation from August 1914, although not a complete fulfilment of what was promised to Poles back then.

Some of the texts dealing with the August 1914 Great Duke’s proclamation to the Poles refer, on the one hand, to the political consequences it could have in German and in Austrian Poland, on the one hand, due to the positive reception of the proclamation among Polish subjects of the Kaiser and the Austrian Emperor and, on the other hand, due to the problems that the Great Duke’s proclamation could generate to the Central Powers. For instance, whereas on August 21 ‘La Correspondencia de España’ claimed that “the Tsar’s proclamation has caused great emotion among the subjects of such a race [Poles] of the Kaiser and Franz Josef”<sup>143</sup>, six days earlier ‘La Época’ had argued that the fact the Tsar had promised “the independence and territorial integrity of the kingdom” of Poland would generate problems in the German Empire<sup>144</sup>.

The examined Spanish press articles about the Great Duke’s manifesto did not make a great effort to tell the readers who were the exact addressees the Russian government had in mind for the manifesto, and rather focused more on its content, causes and implications. In regard to the proclamation’s target audience, Andrzej Chwalba claims that “the manifesto of the Great Duke was addressed not only to Poles, but also to the Western Allies, who expressed their joy and congratulated the wisdom of their Eastern ally”<sup>145</sup>.

However, a question arises, for which Poles was in reality the autonomy/freedom promised by the Tsar? Was it for all of them? Or was it only for those in Russia? Or was it only for those in the lands conquered by the Central Powers?

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<sup>141</sup> “Desde Londres. El misterio ruso”, ‘El Imparcial’, 9.01.1917, p. 1.

<sup>142</sup> “Noticias de interés, Polonia y Rusia”, ‘La Acción’, 5.02.1917, p. 3.

<sup>143</sup> “La gran batalla”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 21.08.1914, p. 3. Original quoted words: “la proclama del Zar a los polacos ha causado gran emoción entre los súbditos de dicha raza que tienen el Kaiser y Francisco José”.

<sup>144</sup> “Notas de última hora”, ‘La Época’, 15.08.1914, p. 3.

<sup>145</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p.189, Original quoted text: “manifest wielkiego księcia był adresowany nie tylko do Polaków, lecz także do zachodnich sojuszników, którzy wyrazili radość oraz pogratulowali mądrości wschodniemu sojusznikowi”.

As a matter of fact, historian Piotr Wandycz claims that “the autonomy mentioned in the grand ducal manifesto was not to apply immediately to Congress Poland but only to the conquered lands”<sup>146</sup>. Did the Spanish newspapers’ editors believe that in reality only the Polish Kingdom within the Russian Empire was to be given freedom by Russia or did they consider that other Polish territories, under Central Powers’ statehood, would become part of that Polish Kingdom promised by the Great Duke? Did they consider that only these other Polish lands, outside Russia would be given political freedom?

Different perspectives concerning this question appeared in the Spanish press: around a year and a half after the manifesto was issued, Germanophile Catholic newspaper ‘El Debate’ published a press note from Germany, which clearly intended to undermine the proclamation’s significance, and which claimed that ‘La Victoire’’s columnist George Bienione argued, on the one hand, that the proclamation lost its value because of not being signed by the Tsar and, on the other hand, that the manifesto “is not addressed to Russian Poles but to those of German and Austrian origin”<sup>147</sup>. In relation to Poles outside the Kingdom (Russian Poland), ‘ABC’’s contributor José Juan Cadenas stated that the Russian army would conquer German Poland and this would allow the Tsar’s promise to be fulfilled<sup>148</sup>, so we can interpret that he reckoned the new Poland would be bigger than just Russian Poland, given that Russia would win the war or at least conquer the Polish-inhabited areas of Germany.

Panslavism and Polish-Russian fraternity are other concepts appearing in the Spanish press texts about the Great Duke’s manifesto. For instance, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’’s Ramiro de Maeztu analysed the Great Duke’s proclamation from a Panslavism vs. Germanism point of view, when he claimed that “the Tsar has gone to war as the protector of the Slavic nations. To honour this mission it was needed that he did not keep being the oppressor of Poland”<sup>149</sup>. In relation to this idea, Chwalba claims that “the manifesto successfully hid the Russian imperial goals and fit well in the Panslavic idea”<sup>150</sup>, whereas Wandycz argues that the Great Duke’s

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<sup>146</sup> P. Wandycz, *The lands of partitioned Poland 1795-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 336.

<sup>147</sup> “Un artículo de Georges Bienaime”, ‘El Debate’, 7.03.1916, p. 1.

<sup>148</sup> “Impresiones de París. La resurrección de Federico Barbarroja”, ‘ABC’, 8.08.1914, p. 10.

<sup>149</sup> “La resurrección de Polonia”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 21.08.1914, p. 1. Original quoted text: “El Zar ha ido a la guerra a título de protector de los pueblos eslavos. Para hacer honor a esta misión, era preciso que no siguiera siendo el opresor de Polonia”.

<sup>150</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, p. 189. Original quoted text: “Manifest udanie maskował rosyjskie cele imperialne i dobrze się wkomponowywał w idee panslawistyczne”.

manifesto “was designed as a gesture of reconciliation as well as an attempt to create a bond between the Poles and the tsarist Empire”<sup>151</sup>.

## Spain and the creation of a new Polish kingdom by the Central Powers on November 5 1916

The November 1916 Austro-German (in fact more German than Austrian) plan for the creation an independent Poland in conquered and occupied former Russian Poland’s lands, will be here analysed not only from a Spanish perspective but also regarding its global context, defined by the main powers’ position towards the Polish claim for an independent and reunited state. This section is not only focusing on the proclamation itself, but also on its causes and on the reactions it generated in Poland, Spain and internationally.

### **Spanish Echoes of the Proclamation**

The November 5 Proclamation generated many comments in the Spanish press pages, not only about the very political event and its implications but also on Polish history, society, culture and geography. Poland became a recurrent topic in the main newspapers the Spaniards read every day. As Polish historian and international relations analyst Tadeusz Kisielewski claims, “the most important effect of the November 5 Proclamation and the later creation of the Provisional State Council was the internationalization of the Polish question”<sup>152</sup>. This internationalization was no doubt effective and visible in the Spanish press because there was an increase in the amount of contributions directly or indirectly focused on the Polish question since November 5, 1916, mainly those focused on the Central Powers’ plans for the future Poland. This was also visible in an increase in the amount of details and length of the texts in the Spanish press dedicated to the November 5 Proclamation and the Polish question in general.

It is worth remarking that precisely around a week after the November 5 Proclamation, on November 14, the newspaper ‘La Época’ criticized that the Spanish government’s policy known as ‘national reconstitution’ only dedicated 100.000 pesetas to the Ministry of State, and also criticized the fact this budget was destined wholly to buy a house in Lisbon, while it

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<sup>151</sup> P. Wandycz, *The lands of partitioned Poland 1795-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

<sup>152</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

claimed that Spain's foreign policy in America, Africa and Eastern Europe were very important and the national reconstitution program should transfer funds to Spain's diplomatic work in these world regions. It is significant that the newspaper considered Eastern Europe a priority for Spain<sup>153</sup>. Spain's interests in Africa were logical due to the remaining colonies in Morocco, Western Sahara and Equatorial Guinea, and in America as well, due to the important cultural and economic relations with the former Spanish territories in Latin America. However, an important doubt remains: was the Spanish newspaper only referring to Spain's interest to keep good relations with Tsarist Russia or was it also considering the upcoming independent Poland? Did the November 5 Proclamation have any influence on such a comment? It is very difficult to guess it correctly, but in further research projects it would be worth analysing other publications by "La Época" on the topic of Spain's foreign policy priorities to increase the chances of finding a clear answer to these questions.

### **Spain's Political and Diplomatic Reactions to the November 5 Proclamation**

It can be stated that Spain's government and diplomacy did not react officially and publicly to the November 5 Proclamation whatsoever. However, comments on the November, 5, 1916 proclamation of a new Polish political entity have been found in the diplomatic correspondence stored in Madrid's Historical National Archive Foreign Ministry Collection.

For instance, references to the November 5 Proclamation have been found in the diplomatic correspondence between the Embassies in Petrograd and Berlin, and the Ministry of State, as well as in a letter received in Spain's embassy in London sent by quite an allegedly renowned aristocratic Pole in Great Britain, Paweł Piast Riedelski<sup>154</sup>, a Polish throne claimant. Further details about these November 5 Proclamation-related correspondences are presented below.

In addition, it should be highlighted that, as we know from the examined press sources, Spain's prime minister Count of Romanones included the November 5 German-Austrian proclamation in the agenda of the November 9, 1916 Ministers Council, in the section in which the international political situation was discussed<sup>155</sup>, but no source has been found which would

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<sup>153</sup> "Eso no es obstrucción", 'La Época', 14.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>154</sup> 1884-1944. Self-proclaimed descendent of the Polish Piast dynasty and legitimate candidate to the Polish Throne during the Great War <https://www.durhamatwar.org.uk/story/13752/> [consulted on 29.11.2021].

<sup>155</sup> "Consejo de Ministros", 'El Debate', 10.09.1916, p. 5.

clarify what exactly he and the other ministers discussed on this topic<sup>156</sup>. However, it must be clarified, regarding this meeting of the Minister's Council, that the Spanish newspapers' focus was on what Romanones said concerning the US elections, and the press just mentioned that the November 5 Proclamation topic was in the agenda, but not what was discussed.

However, there were a few non-public reactions to the November 5 Proclamation in Spain's State Ministry and its diplomatic missions. The first internal reaction to the November 5 events in the Spanish diplomacy occurred on November 6 when Spain's ambassador in Berlin Polo de Bernabé y Pilón sent a telegram addressed to Spain's state minister reporting the proclamation of an "independent territory under constitutional hereditary monarchy whose destiny remains for its own"<sup>157</sup>. Polo de Bernabé's words do not include any actual interpretation, opinion or own input, and the Spanish diplomat just transferred to Spain's diplomacy headquarters the information released on November 5 by the Central Powers. No further comment is found in his words. One should wonder if in case he had sent a letter instead of a telegram on that day he would have conveyed his own interpretation of the November 5 political event with plenty of details. However, taking into account the wording he used, one could interpret that in his telegram Polo Bernabé gave veracity to the German-Austrian proclamation and into a certain extent believed that the proclaiming powers were committed to fulfil what was promised in the declaration. However, in his telegram Spain's ambassador in Berlin gave more details about the content of the November 5 Proclamation:

"The new kingdom, with the guarantee of both allied powers, will be able to develop freely. Its organization, instruction and direction will be determined by mutual agreement. The allied monarchs have the favourable confidence that these achievements that ensure prosperity and independence deserve the approval of all peoples. The western nations neighbouring the kingdom of Poland will have on their eastern frontier a people free and jealous of their nationality that they will gladly see flourish. A similar manifesto will be published in Lublin by the Austro-Hungarian

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<sup>156</sup> A written record of the meeting must have existed, but when asking the Presidency Ministry Archives in Madrid, I was replied that they do not have these Ministers' Council written records for 1916, although they have them for other years.

<sup>157</sup> AHN, H3131, 6.11.1916, Spain's Ambassador in Berlin Polo Bernabé to Spain's State Minister of State Amalio Gimeno Cabañas. Original quoted words: "se proclamará este territorio estado independencia bajo monarquía hereditaria y constitucional cuyos destinos le quedan reservados".



Governor General. Nothing is resolved on the future dynasty, an important point that is reserved for now”<sup>158</sup>.

Despite Spain not reacting officially to the November 5 proclamation, this significant event regarding the Polish question generated a concrete and uncomfortable diplomatic challenge for Spain’s Ministry of State. This challenge began on November 11, 1916, when the Tsarist Russia’s ambassador in Spain Prince Ivan Koudacheff<sup>159</sup> asked Spain’s Minister of State Amalio Gimeno y Cabañas what Spain would officially do if the country received an official note from the new Polish Kingdom created by the Central Powers [asking for recognition]<sup>160</sup>. Spain’s state minister Gimeno replied to Koudacheff that Spain, following its neutrality policy and in order not to break it, would not refer to this topic until the end of the war and added that Spain still recognized the pre-war political and territorial *status quo*, mentioning the cases of Belgium, Serbia and Egypt<sup>161</sup>.

It is worth noting that Gimeno mentioned Belgium and Serbia, which were occupied during the war by the Central Powers. In addition, he mentioned the case of Egypt, which before the war, despite British control, officially was still *de iure* a part of the Ottoman Empire and was turned by the British into their protectorate after the outburst of the war. However, Gimeno did not mention that Russian Poland was occupied by the Germany and Austria-Hungary.

However, this was not the only communication Spain’s Ministry of State received from the Russian ambassador in Madrid in the context of the November 5 Proclamation. On November 28, 1916 Koudacheff wrote a letter addressed to Spain’s state minister explaining that intelligence reports from the Russian government indicated that Germany on November 23 started “the forced recruitment of Russian Polish subjects for the army” in both Russian Poland

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<sup>158</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “El nuevo reino, con la garantía de ambas potencias aliadas, podrá desenvolverse libremente. Su organización, instrucción y dirección serán de común acuerdo determinados. Los monarcas aliados tienen la favorable confianza de que estas realizaciones que le aseguran la prosperidad e independencia merecen la aprobación de todos los pueblos. Las naciones occidentales vecinas de reino de Polonia tendrán en su frontera oriental un pueblo libre y celoso de su nacionalidad que verán gustosos florecer. Un manifiesto análogo será publicado en Lublin por el gobernador general. Nada hay resuelto sobre la futura dinastía, importante punto que se reserva por ahora”.

<sup>159</sup> Russian ambassador in Spain from March 1916 to April 1917. R. Martínez, *Sofía Casanova, corresponsal de ABC en la Revolución Rusa*, [in]: “Nalgures Tomo XIII”, A Coruña 2017, p. 257-288; p. 265.

<sup>160</sup> AHN, H-3024, *Actitud de España ante la declaración referente al Reino de Polonia*. 11.11.1916. Russia’s ambassador in Madrid Ivan Koudacheff to Spain’s state minister Amalio Gimeno.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibidem*, *Actitud de España ante la declaración referente al Reino de Polonia*. 11.11.1916, Spain’s state minister Amalio Gimeno to Russia’s ambassador in Spain Ivan Koudacheff.

and Germany, because Russian Polish workers had been sent to Germany. In his letter, Koudacheff added that: “already before this date [November 23] the Austrian authorities had obliged the Polish Russian subjects to enter the gendarmerie which forms an integral part of the Austro-Hungarian army. All men born from the year 1874 to the year 1894 who form the classes subject to military service in Russia are called up to arms”. Next, the Russian ambassador, on behalf of the Russian government, requested Spain’s State Ministry to ask its ambassadors in Vienna and Berlin to check the veracity of these pieces of information in front of the Austrian and German governments<sup>162</sup>. Koudacheff also asked that if the Spanish diplomats in the Central Empires could confirm that this intel about forced recruitment was true, then he requested them to convey the following message to the Central Powers’ governments:

“Russia considers the Poles, Russian subjects, just as before, bound by their oath of loyalty to his Majesty the Emperor. The imperial government places all the responsibility on the German and Austro-Hungarian governments for the measures contrary to international law, taken with regard to Russian Poland and in particular for the enlistment in the army and the forced labour imposed on the population. of Russian Poland”<sup>163</sup>.

On the next day, State Ministry’s subsecretary Marquis of Amposta (Eugenio Ferraz y Alcalá-Galiano) replied to Koudacheff assuring him he had forwarded his request to Spain’s ambassadors in Germany and Austria<sup>164</sup>. On the same day Spain’s State Minister Amalio Gimeno sent a telegram to Spain’s ambassadors in the German and Austrian capitals, respectively, in which he forwarded Koudacheff’s request and asked the ambassadors to report the “results” of their inquiries<sup>165</sup>.

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<sup>162</sup> *Ibidem*, 28.11.1916, Russian Empire’s ambassador in Madrid Jean Koudacheff to Spain’s State Minister Amalio Gimeno, “ Original quoted text in Spanish: “antes de esa fecha autoridades austriacas habían obligado a polacos, súbditos rusos a entrar en gendarmería que forma parte integrante del ejército austro-húngaro. Son llamados a las armas los nacidos desde el año 1874 a 1894 que forman las clases obligadas al servicio militar en Rusia”.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibidem*, 28.11.1916. Russian Empire’s ambassador in Madrid Jean Koudacheff to Spain’s State Minister Amalio Gimeno., Original quoted text: “ Rusia considera a los polacos súbditos rusos, enteramente como antes, ligados por su juramento de fidelidad a SM el Emperador. Gobierno Imperial hace recaer sobre los gobiernos alemán y austro-húngaro la responsabilidad de las medidas contrarias al derecho internacional adoptadas respecto a Polonia rusa y en particular sobre alistamiento en ejército y trabajo forzado impuesto a la población de la Polonia rusa”.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibidem*, Marquis of Amposta (Eugenio Ferraz y Alcalá-Galiano) to Russian Empire’s ambassador in Madrid Jean Koudacheff, 29.11.1916.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibidem*, Spain’s State Minister Amalio Gimeno to Spain’s ambassador in Berlin Luis Polo Bernabé; Spain’s State Minister Amalio Gimeno to Spain’s ambassador in Vienna Antonio de Castro Casaleiz.

On February 13, 1917 Spain's ambassador in Vienna sent a telegram to Spain's state minister, informing the latter that Austria-Hungary's Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied to him that:

“The information from the Russian government regarding the alleged enlistment of Polish forces in the Austro-Hungarian gendarmerie, which is not part of the imperial and real army, does not correspond to the facts. There is no obligation for inhabitants of the kingdom of Poland to serve in the army itself or in the gendarmerie. Poles from the kingdom who serve in the gendarmerie in territory occupied by Austro-Hungarian troops entered freely and only after applying for admission”<sup>166</sup>.

Two days later Spain's State Minister Amalio Gimeno forwarded this information to Russia's ambassador in Madrid, without any additional comment on the question<sup>167</sup>. No response from the Spanish ambassador in Germany regarding a reply from Germany's foreign Affairs ministry is seen in the examined archival documentation on this topic. Unless diplomatic correspondence has been lost, Polo Bernabé only communicated that he had forwarded Koudacheff's request to Germany's Foreign Affairs ministry.

### **Other diplomatic reactions to the November 5 Proclamation**

When it comes to internal diplomatic correspondence in Spain's State Ministry, on November 9, 1916 Spain's chargé d'affaires in Petrograd<sup>168</sup>, Justo Garrido Cisneros claimed:

“I am convinced that there are very few Poles who are not satisfied with what has been conceded to them by the Austro-German governments and [those who] are not satisfied [is] because they fear that due to the existence of borders between Russia and Poland, their commerce will lose the Russian market because it will not be able to compete with the German one and that would be their economic ruin”<sup>169</sup>.

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<sup>166</sup>*Ibidem*. Spain's ambassador in Vienna Antonio de Castro Casaleiz to Spain's State Minister Amalio Gimeno, 13.02.1917. Original quoted text: “las informaciones Gobierno ruso respecto pretendido alistamiento fuerzas polacas en gendarmería austro-húngara que por lo demás no forma parte ejército imperial y real no corresponde a los hechos. Ninguna obligación existe para habitantes reino Polonia servicio ejército propiamente dicho ni gendarmería. Polacos originarios del reino que sirven gendarmería territorio ocupado tropas austro húngaras entraron libremente y solamente después haber solicitado su admisión”.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibidem*. Spain's State Minister Amalio Gimeno to Russia's ambassador in Spain Jean Koudacheff, 15.02.1917

<sup>168</sup> Interestingly enough, Garrido used the title ambassador instead of chargé d'affaires in this diplomatic letter

<sup>169</sup> AHN, H2605, 9.11.1916. Spain's chargé d'affaires in Petrograd Garrido Cisneros to Spain's State Minister Count of Romanones (Alvaro de Figueroa y Torres). Original quoted text: “Tengo el convencimiento de que son

On November 15, 1916 Garrido Cisneros sent another encrypted telegram to Spain's state minister reporting a protest by the Russian government on the November 5 Proclamation, according to Garrido, in his own interpretation, "against Poland's declaration of independence", arguing violation of international rights and claiming Russia intends to fulfil its plans towards Poland as it had been already published twice. In addition, Garrido informed that the protest would be "issued to the neutral countries" by means of Russian diplomats<sup>170</sup>. However, on November 21, 6 days later, Garrido highlighted that "against what everyone expected, in the inauguration session of the Duma the [Russian] government did not make any protest against the Austro-German Act that gave Poland its independence" and also argued that the speech by the representative of the Polish Circle (Koło) in the Duma, Jan Harusewicz, showed criticism of the Russian government and accused it of being responsible for Germany having taken such an action and at the same time, according to Garrido, only expressed its opposition against the November 5 Proclamation "given the circumstances"<sup>171</sup>. These circumstances Harusewicz referred to, reported by the Spanish diplomat, can be interpreted as the fact that the Polish Circle in the Russian Duma could not praise the November 5 Proclamation inside the Russian Parliament even if most probably was somewhat positive about it.

It is also worth mentioning that Spain's ambassador in Vienna Castro y Casaleiz met with Austrian Emperor Franz Josef on November 6<sup>172</sup> in Schönbrunn Palace, according to a press note published on 'La Época' on November 7<sup>173</sup>. It would be interesting, in further research, to find a report by the Spanish ambassador about the meeting, in order to see if the new Polish kingdom creation was discussed or at least mentioned. Nothing has been found in Spain's National Historical Archive Foreign Affairs collection on this topic.

Last but not least, when it comes to diplomatic reactions to the November 5 Proclamation involving Spain, it is also worth mentioning that on November 9, 1916 self-called

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muy pocos los polacos que no están satisfechos con lo concedido por los Gobiernos austroalemanes y estos pocos no lo están porque temen que al existir fronteras entre Rusia y Polonia, su comercio perderá el mercado ruso, pues no podrá competir con el alemán y sería esto su ruina económica".

<sup>170</sup> AHN, H2993, 15.11.1916, Spain's chargé d'affaires in Petrograd Justo Garrido to Spain's state minister Count of Romanones.

<sup>171</sup> AHN, H2993, 21.11.1916. Spain's charge d'affaires in Petrograd Justo Garrido to Spain's state minister Count of Romanones. Original quoted words "En contra de lo que todo el mundo esperaba, el Gobierno no hizo en la sesión inaugural de la Duma declaración alguna de protesta contra el acta austro-alemán dando la independencia a Polonia".

<sup>172</sup> The meeting took place around 15 days before Franz Joseph's death, before the Austrian Emperor caught a pneumonia.

<sup>173</sup> "Despachos telegráficos. Entrevista del emperador de Austria con el embajador español", 'La Época', 7.11.1916, p. 1.

Duke or Prince Paul (Paweł) Piast Riedelski, a Polish-origin aristocrat and want-to-be Polish King, residing in Great Britain, wrote a letter addressed to Spain's state minister that he delivered in Spain's embassy in London. On the letter he criticized the German-Austrian proclamation and claimed that a political solution for Poland, including its borders settlement, should be reached in a peace congress<sup>174</sup>. On the same day, Spain's ambassador in London forwarded to Spain's state minister a translation into Spanish of the letter sent by Piast Riedelski<sup>175</sup>.

It can be guessed that Riedelski probably sent a similar letter to the other neutral and allied countries' embassies in London to convey his critical stand on the November 5 Proclamation. It is interesting to see that Piast Riedelski had already sent his proposal for an independent Polish kingdom to then Spain's Foreign Minister Manuel Garcia Prieto in 1911.

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<sup>174</sup> AHN, H2605, Paul Piast Radecki to Spain's ambassador in London Alfonso Merry del Val y Zulueta, 9.11.1916

<sup>175</sup> AHN, H2605, 9.11.1916, Spain's ambassador in London Alfonso Merry del Val y Zulueta to Spain's state minister Count of Romanones. The content of the translated letter, originally in French, was the following: "Prince Paul, Zbawca (Salvator) Piast-Riedelski, from 18 Catharine Street, Liverpool, cordially greets HE the Ambassador of Spain in London and requests that HE the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Madrid is communicated the following statement asking him to record it in the archives of the Kingdom of Spain and Castile: His Serene Highness Prince Paul Zbawca Piast Riedelski, member of the Red Cross of Spain since 1910 (February or March) pretender to the Piast throne president for life of the Polish national league with residence prior to the declaration of war in 1914 in Zinesienie near Gwóro read with inexpressible astonishment the proclamation issued in German by HM Prussian Emperor of Germany as well as by HM King Emperor of Austria-Hungary, King of Galicia, Austrian Poland, concerning the reconstitution of the Polish kingdom of the Congress of Vienna of 1815 in the so-called (independent) Kingdom but in fact constituted as a security lever by the Central Empires. In any case, HH would like to point out that while being somewhat appreciative of the liberal measures that the Center Powers introduce in Poland by virtue of the recent arrangements and above all without incorporating Greater Poland (Wielkopolska) as well as the mentioned Austrian Poland, Galicia (Galicya), [these] are contrary to any agreement and opposed to the legitimate wishes of the vast majority of the Polish nation that has inhabited the territory since 1772. Furthermore, since unfortunately we are still in a war that is so disastrous for all of Europe, these Austrian-German decisions can therefore only be considered as temporary measures until the moment when a forthcoming congress of belligerents and neutrals puts into effect the form of a new Polish government proposed some years ago by Prince Piast-Riedelski, one of whose memoirs was acknowledged in a letter signed M Garcia Prieto, Madrid, October 25, 1911, then Minister of Foreign Affairs in Spain, this congress should also end the extension of the kingdom of Poland that has received so many dangerous blows and will put an end to the misfortunes that private interest, hatred, ambition and dissent have given rise to it and that Congress will then adopt the procedures that justice and dignity prescribe for the completion of a definitive settlement".

## **General Trends in the Spanish Press Reactions to the November 5 Proclamation**

Already after a first analysis of the relevant press sources, it can be concluded that what the Spanish newspapers mostly focused on, in their immediate reactions to the November 5 Proclamation, was the reasons and intentions that moved the Central Empires to make such a significant political movement. In addition, the Spanish press highlighted the plan to create a Polish army under German command and made an assessment of the truth behind the German and Austrian promises to the Poles.

On the one hand, most pro-allied newspapers placed in doubt the truth of the German and Austrian promises and regarded the proclamation exclusively as a way to launch the process to recruit Polish soldiers for their armies. On the other hand, Germanophile newspapers, except for a few non-aligned contributors on their staff, advocated the idea that Germany and Austria-Hungary in fact had liberated Poland after over 120 years of political slavery.

All in all, in November 1916 most of the examined Spanish newspapers were clearly favourable to the Polish cause, but, on the one hand, the Germanophile media reacted generally positive to the November 5 Proclamation, with few exceptions among their contributors, while the pro-allied media unanimously reacted with criticism towards the Central Powers' decision, among other reasons, because of the lack of a territorial Polish reunion in the new Polish kingdom proposed on November 5.

## **Comments on Polish Political Conferences before the November 5 Proclamation**

It is also worth mentioning that two Polish political conferences were mentioned by newspaper 'La Época' as one of the causes of the Two-Emperor November 5, 1916 proclamation. Namely, the newspaper's editors interpreted that the November 5 Proclamation was the result of "[German] propaganda in the whole Vistula region, later a Polish conference in Cracow and finally another one in Lausanne"<sup>176</sup>.

The Polish conference in Cracow that the newspaper mentioned was the event that led to the creation of the Supreme National Committee (Naczelny Komitet Narodowy) in August

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<sup>176</sup> "La independencia de la Polonia rusa", 'La Época', 7.11.1916, p. 1.

1914<sup>177</sup>. The Polish conference in Lausanne about which the Spanish newspaper reported, was in fact the creation of the Comité Général de Suisse pour les Victimes de la Guerre en Pologne (General Committee in Switzerland for the War Victims in Poland) on January 9, 1915<sup>178</sup>. The newspaper, by referring to the Polish conferences in Cracow and Lausanne as causes of the November 5 Proclamation, was overrating the Polish implication on a project which was designed and agreed only by the Central Empires, although it relied on the support from 'activist' Poles, with Bogdan Hutten-Czapski and Władysław Studnicki, who worked very closely with governor Hans von Beseler, in a leading role.

### **German-Austrian Negotiations before the November 5 Proclamation**

Neutrally-oriented newspaper 'La Époque' claimed that in the context of German-Austrian negotiations regarding the future of the Polish occupied lands, which according to the newspaper started in October 1915, the "former Austro-Hungarian Minister of Treasury, [Polish Leon] Biliński, was in charge of "making the union of the main Polish districts"<sup>179</sup>. 'La Époque's conclusion, probably based on telegraphic press notes from Germany, does not make a lot of sense when we take into consideration that Biliński was a Galician conservative, and these were never favourable to a Galicia taken or controlled by Germany, so, surely Biliński was favourable to a "trialistic" solution with both former Congress Poland and Galicia together inside Austria, becoming the third monarchy, the Polish one, in the Habsburg Empire<sup>180</sup>.

Regarding the causes and the context of German-Austrian negotiations before the November 5 Proclamation, Polish historian Andrzej Chwalba argues that the significant rise of the Polish independentist movement in Congress Poland in 1916 gave the German and Austrian occupiers an additional reason to consider the creation of a Polish state under their control. The Polish historian claims that by means of the Kingdom of Poland creation, the Central Powers would try to prevent the Polish irredentist movement from supporting the allied cause. Chwalba also argues that pro-Central Powers Polish 'activists' pressured the German occupation authorities to create an independent Polish state as soon as possible, because Russia's position in the war was getting weaker and weaker, and the Tsar's Empire could soon ask Germany for a separate peace, what would eliminate any options of an independent Poland. Moreover, Chwalba claims that "Bethmann Hollweg – not excluding the possibility of peace with Russia–

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<sup>177</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>178</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>179</sup> "La independencia de la Polonia rusa", 'La Époque', 7.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>180</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 150.

however, believed that one should refer to the reality and above all, announce the rise of the satellite Polish kingdom”<sup>181</sup>. The author also claims that the Central Powers wanted to proclaim the Polish kingdom already in summer 1916 but initially could not reach an agreement between them until the German-Austrian meetings in Vienna from August 11 to August 16<sup>182</sup>.

So, on this question one can only but agree with Chwalba, that in 1916 the creation of the Polish buffer state was, for the Central Powers, a priority over a peace negotiation with Russia. In this sense, Piotr S. Wandycz also supports this view when he argues that: “in August 1916 Hindenburg and Lunderdorf [...] striking a tactical alliance with Beseler, they prevailed upon Bethmann Hollweg and those German politicians who felt that any decisive move on the Polish question would slam the door to future negotiations with Russia to go along”<sup>183</sup>.

### **A Spaniard in the November 5 Proclamation in Warsaw**

In reality, the November 5 Proclamation was not such a foreign, strange and far away event for the Spanish press. In this sense, it is important to highlight that a Spaniard had the privilege to attend himself the proclamation event in Warsaw’s Royal Castle. This was ‘ABC’’s correspondent Javier Bueno (who signed his articles under the pseudonym Antonio Azpeitua). The fact that a Spanish press correspondent attended the proclamation ceremony of the new Polish Kingdom by the Central Powers is remarkable. ‘ABC’’s correspondent in Berlin, who was invited by the German government along with other four foreign correspondents from neutral countries who travelled with the German press to Warsaw, published a very detailed chronicle about the proclamation of the new Polish Kingdom on December 10, 1916<sup>184</sup>. This was without any doubt, one of the main highlights in the Spanish press regarding the November 5 Proclamation, and the Polish question, overall, during the Great War. Therefore, it is clear that ‘ABC’ had a much bigger and detailed coverage of such a meaningful political happening than other newspapers, although with a huge delay, because Bueno’s first chronicle did not appear until December 10, when comments from other press contributors in Spain had already

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<sup>181</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 278. Original quoted text: “Bethmann Hollweg – nie wykluczając możliwości pokoju z Rosją – uważał jednak, że należy odnieść się do tego co realne, i przede wszystkim ogłosić powstanie satelickiego Królestwa Polskiego”.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>183</sup> P. Wandycz, *The lands of partitioned Poland 1795-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

<sup>184</sup> “La resurrección de un reino. Varsovia en el día de la proclamación de la independencia de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 10.12.1916, p. 3-5.



appeared in the same newspaper and in others. In reality, the first text sent by Bueno from Warsaw appeared on December 5, and was, in fact, the second part of Buenos's chronicle on the November 5 Proclamation, not the first one. A problem with mail correspondence must have been the reason for this lack of synchronization when publishing the two parts of Bueno's chronicle from Warsaw.

In any case, it can be interpreted that for a generally Germanophile newspaper like 'ABC', being able to report directly from Warsaw on an event that somehow, despite different interpretations, displayed the Central Powers as the resurrectors of Poland into Spanish public opinion, was really an asset.

When analysing the content of mentioned Bueno's articles, it is worth explaining that the Spanish journalist described what Warsaw looked like on November 5, 1916, in the following terms:

“[...]As we left the hotel to meet Governor General von Beseler, the city was magically decked out. The red and white flag that for a century was condemned not to wave, now waves bravely and proudly on the balconies, in the main and official buildings, on the trams, in the hands of men and children's arms and the party was not yet in full swing”<sup>185</sup>.

As Javier Bueno explained, a few hours before the event, Beseler greeted the journalists, the Spanish correspondent among them, in the General Governor's residential palace at Belweder and told them the following:

“this day is the resurrection of Poland, oppressed and tyrannized for a century. Today the ideal for which Polish hearts long will be realized. The event is also of great importance to Germany and its allies. Our enemies will say that we are only guided by the need for men for our army, but we have the consciousness of a higher thought”<sup>186</sup>.

In addition, Bueno described Beseler as “medium height, broad, strong, very much a soldier. His head is snowy but remains upright. And the plump hands move, expressing energy to the words”<sup>187</sup>. It is also worth explaining that Bueno did not give much details about what

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<sup>185</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: „[...] al salir del hotel para ir a presentarnos al gobernador general, von Beseler, la ciudad aparecía engalanada como por arte de magia. La bandera roja y blanca que durante un siglo estuvo condenada a no ondear, ahora flameaba valiente y orgullosa en los balcones, en los edificios privados y oficiales, en los tranvías, en las manos de los hombres y en los brazuelos de los chicuelos. Y ¡todavía la fiesta no había llegado a su apogeo!.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibidem*.

happened inside the castle during the proclamation and didn't quote words used during the event by its participants.

However, Javier Bueno wrote about the Poles' cold reaction to the November 5 Proclamation, once the initial enthusiasm was over. Bueno described an atmosphere of celebration after the proclamation was read in the castle, but claimed that once the event finished in the streets of Warsaw "the first manifestation of enthusiasm extinguished, people have calmed down too soon, they are not drunk with joy"<sup>188</sup>. In his second article, published on December 5, Bueno also mentioned a cold atmosphere without much political enthusiasm and explained why this happened: 'ABC's' correspondent initially referred to Polish fears to a Russian return and disbelief in the proclamation as possible causes. He interviewed several Varsovians to know their particular reactions to the creation of the new Polish Kingdom<sup>189</sup> and he particularly reported his interviews of a Polish Jew and a Polish landowner. The interviewed Jew was very pro-German and was very critical of the Poles. On the other hand, the Polish landowner highlighted that as long as German troops would be in Poland there would not be independence and also argued that Poles were distrustful towards the proclamation due to the unfulfilled promises by the Tsar<sup>190</sup>. In relation to this, if we regard the landowner interviewed by Bueno as representative of most Poles in former Congress Poland then we can identify a Polish lack of trust to political freedom promises, both from Russia and from the Central Powers.

It is also worth commenting on Bueno's long, additional, chronicle dedicated mainly to his conversation with Adam Ronikier. Who was Adam Ronikier and why Javier Bueno dedicated so much attention to him? Polish historian Chwalba mentions Ronikier as one of the members of the activist Polish delegation to Berlin and Vienna just before the November 5 Proclamation. In addition, this author claims that in 1916 Ronikier supported the newly created Klub Państwowców Polskich (Polish State Citizens Club), led by Władysław Studnicki and made up of those Germanophiles who collaborated with the German occupiers. Chwalba also explains that in January 1916 Ronikier became the president of main administration of the RGO (Rada Główna Opiekuńcza, The Main Caring Council), an aid organization he contributed to create. Chwalba adds that in the summer of 1917, Ronikier, along with Jan Drucki-Lubecki and

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<sup>188</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>189</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>190</sup> *Ibidem.*

Zdzisław Łempicki, was proposed as a regent by the German administration of occupied Russian Poland, but this proposal generated protests and was discarded<sup>191</sup>.

Focusing on what is mostly relevant here, Ronikier told the Spanish press correspondent that Poles were sceptic about the Central Powers' declaration and Poles tended to be untrusty due to their recent historical experiences. However, according to the Polish political activist, it could not be claimed that Poles absolutely did not believe in the November 5 Proclamation. Ronikier, as Bueno reported, added that the Polish reaction to the German-Austrian decree should have been larger and it would be eventually larger, but the cause of this low reaction was the fact that Poles, after Russian repression, dreamed about independence but "lost a bit the sense of reality, therefore, for the Polish nation there is no middle term, either tyranny or total and absolute independence". Ronikier described his own attitude and the attitude of Poles' around him towards the German-Austrian proclamation this way: "we, these who are in direct relation with High German powers, that we know the spirit guiding Germany, we cannot doubt, we have full trust in the fact that a new era of freedom and sovereignty starts for Poland. Germany does not deceive us when it starts telling us: what I concede you, I do it firstly thinking in my convenience and then in yours"<sup>192</sup>. In his conversation with Bueno, Ronikier also argued that the Polish nation was not aware of the benefits of "mutual convenience" between Germany and Poland and the "influential" warranties Poles like himself were already obtaining from Germany, benefits for Poland that most of the nation could not see but which the Polish nation "directors" could see. He added that "it is clear that for the masses, everything that is not the constitution of an exclusively Polish government, without any foreign intervention, does not correspond to its idea of independence". Ronikier also admitted that he was not surprised by the cold Polish reaction to the proclamation, and explained that he had warned von Beseler about it. The Polish politician also admitted that he expected even less enthusiasm among Poles. He added Germany trusted in Poles' loyalty and leading Poles wanted to give Germany security about Polish soldiers fighting under the Germany army. Bueno reported that he asked Ronikier what would be the "Polish intervention in the new Kingdom's government" created by the Germans. Ronikier replied to Bueno that from Germans Poles had already obtained the local administrations, which were never given to the Poles by Russia. He also highlighted that Poles

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<sup>191</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

<sup>192</sup> "La resurrección de un reino. Lo que piensan los directores del pueblo polaco", 'ABC', 1.12.1916, p. 3. Original quoted text: "nosotros, los que estamos en relación directa con los altos poderes alemanes, que sabemos el espíritu que guía a Alemania, no podemos dudar, tenemos plena confianza en que empieza una nueva era de libertad y soberanía para Polonia. Alemania no nos engaña cuando empieza diciéndonos: lo que os concedo, lo hago pensando antes en mi conveniencia y después en la vuestra".

would have power in the fields of agriculture, education and justice, the country's "reconstruction" and industrial organization, even though he admitted that for a transitional period of time German civil servants would be in charge of all these areas until Polish politicians "organized themselves"<sup>193</sup>.

It must be also highlighted that, when asked by Bueno about the fact that German-occupied Polish Kingdom Poles might fear that the November 5 Proclamation meant fighting against Poles in the Russian army, and also asked whether this was the reason why most Poles in the Kingdom were sceptical about the results of the November 5 Proclamation, Ronikier argued this was a sacrifice, a price to pay in order to set borders between Poland and Russia and that fight would be addressed to avoid Russia from coming back to the Kingdom. He argued: "If Germany delivers us our country, we are obliged to defend it, to keep what we obtained after many years of silenced desires. Can we demand from the Germans that they spill their blood to save us from the attacks that the Russians would make against the rising independence? If we weren't capable of defending this freedom with weapons, we would not be worthy of it [freedom]"<sup>194</sup>. He added that he wasn't afraid of retaliation in case the Russians came back, and stated that Poland, along with Germany, would become free and leave "Asia to enter the European community"<sup>195</sup>.

### **Lack of Polish Reunion or Unity in the November 5 Proclamation's Polish Kingdom**

The second most commented aspect about the November 5 declaration across Spanish newspapers was the lack of reunion of the Polish lands, from the three partitions under the new Polish Kingdom. This was about the fact the Central Powers were not yielding Galicia and Poznań region (Greater Poland), Silesia and the Polish-populated Baltic areas, respectively, to the new Polish state they were about to create.

In relation to this matter, it is worth highlighting that whereas 'El Liberal' claimed that the Central Empires were "preserving the other two Polands in slavery"<sup>196</sup>, 'La Época' also

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<sup>193</sup> *Ibidem*, p.4.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: " Si Alemania nos entrega a nuestro país, estamos obligados a defenderlo, a conservar lo que conseguimos al cabo de muchos años de anhelos callados. ¿Podemos exigir a los alemanes que ellos viertan su sangre para guardarnos de los ataques que harán los rusos contra a naciente independencia? Si no fuéramos capaces de defender esta libertad con las armas, seríamos indignos de ella".

<sup>195</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>196</sup> "La Gran farsa de Polonia. Lo que buscan los prusianos", 'El Liberal', 12.11.1916, p. 1.

reported that “Germany does not bestow [Poland] in exchange for the Poznań region a way out to the sea, as the Count Zdzisław Tarnowski promised in the Polish assembly celebrated last January”<sup>197</sup>. ‘La Época’ referred to Count Tarnowski, one of Galician activist conservatives, and by means of this comment reflected that the November 5 Proclamation by the Central Powers did not include in the new created Polish kingdom the Poznań region or any area that would give the new kingdom access to the Baltic Sea. According to ‘La Época’, Tarnowski had claimed in January 1916 in a Polish assembly that the new Polish kingdom would include Poznań and an access to the sea<sup>198</sup>. The Polish assembly which ‘La Época’ referred to was probably an NKN (Supreme National Committee, Naczelny Komitet Narodowy in Polish) event, and further details about Tarnowski’s words place and day have not been found.

When analysing the specific reactions in the Spanish press to the Central Powers’ proclamation, it is worth noting pro-allied newspaper ‘La Correspondencia de España’, criticized the Central Powers’ decision to create a Polish kingdom in the Polish lands taken from the Russians, because it was due to selfishness and not due to regrets or law-related aspects<sup>199</sup>. Criticism to the two-emperor act also came from Pro-allied ‘El Liberal’, which was also very favourable to the Polish cause and claimed that “before being pro-allied, we are advocates of justice and freedom”, justifying this way its criticism of the proclamation<sup>200</sup>. Meanwhile, neutrally oriented ‘La Época’ did not see the proclamation of the new Polish kingdom either as a historical moment or a permanent solution but rather as a trick or a workaround<sup>201</sup>. Similarly as ‘La Época’, one of the Spaniards that, if not the one that best knew the Polish political and social reality at that time, ‘ABC’'s Sofía Casanova, believed the November 5 proclamation did not resolve the Polish question. She also regarded the new kingdom as “too little”<sup>202</sup>. On the opposite, but on the same newspaper, we find ‘ABC’'s contributor José María Salaverría, who claimed that the creation of the new Polish kingdom was “the most significant and positive fact left by the war”<sup>203</sup>.

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<sup>197</sup> “La independencia de la Polonia rusa”, ‘La Época’, 7.11.1916, p. 1

<sup>198</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>199</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 7.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>200</sup> “La Gran Farsa de Polonia. Lo que buscan los prusianos”, ‘El Liberal’, 12. 11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>201</sup> “La independencia de la Polonia rusa”, ‘La Época’, 7.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>202</sup> “ABC en Rusia. La desilusión de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 3.12.1916, p. 3.

<sup>203</sup> “Fuerte y hábil”, ‘ABC’, 10.11.1916, p. 3.

It is also worth bringing attention to the fact that whereas on (Germanophile) ‘ABC’'s ‘Blanco y Negro’ magazine, Angel María Castell<sup>204</sup> claimed that if the Central Powers really wanted to free Poland, they could have done it in peace time before the war and, therefore, the November proclamation’s only goal was to create an army made up of Poles<sup>205</sup>, on ‘El Liberal’ Camilo Barcia Trelles, instead of referring to the pre-war period, claimed that the Central Powers could have freed Poland once they conquered Russian Poland in August 1916<sup>206</sup>.

When it comes to Spanish reactions to the Central Empires’ motivations to create an independent Poland under their control, it is worth highlighting that Pro-Entente newspaper ‘La Correspondencia de España’ argued *a posteriori*, in September 1917, that from the very moment of the November 5 Proclamation, the Central Empires really intended to annex and partition Russian Poland between them. The Spanish newspaper also claimed that those were “the true plans that Berlin and Vienna had when they invented around November, last year, the autonomous Polish state”<sup>207</sup>. It is also worth underlining that, in November 1916, the same newspaper argued that “Poland, the whole Poland, with its Russian, Austrian and German Poles is a political necessity of Europe”<sup>208</sup>. The newspaper’s editors also claimed that:

“If Galicia, Posnania and the Muscovite provinces were united and formed a block of twenty million inhabitants, not only would a historical inequity be repaired, but a lasting and skilful pacifist work would be done. But the November 5 theatrical coup is something very different. Poland, after it, remains torn and vassal. With an illusory promise they [Germany and Austria-Hungary] want to force her [Poland] to shed more blood”<sup>209</sup>.

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<sup>204</sup> 1865-1938. Spanish journalist and writer. Republican. He was the director of the Republican Basque newspaper ‘La Voz de Guipuzcoa’ from 1889 to 1902 and since that year a regular contributor on ‘ABC’: Belaustegi, Unai, *Un Diario Republicano En Un Medio Hostil: la Voz De Guipúzcoa*, 1885-1923, “Historia Contemporánea 49”, Universidad del País Vasco, p. 645-674; p. 653, 657.

<sup>205</sup> “Crónica de la guerra europea”, ‘Blanco y Negro’, 26.11.1916, p. 7.

<sup>206</sup> “Bélgica-Polonia. Not kennt kein Gebot”, ‘El Liberal’, 26.12.1916, p. 2.

<sup>207</sup> “Los polacos”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 6.09.1917, p. 1. Original quoted text: “los verdaderos planes que abrigaban en Berlín y Viena cuando inventaron, allá por noviembre del año pasado, el Estado polaco autónomo”.

<sup>208</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 7.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Si Galitzia, Posnania y las provincias moscovitas fueran unidas y formaran un bloque de veinte millones de habitantes, no sólo se repararía una iniquidad histórica, sino que se haría obra pacifista y duradera y hábil. Mas el golpe teatral del 5 de noviembre es algo muy distinto. Polonia, después de él, sigue despedazada y vasalla. Con una promesa ilusoria se la quiere obligar a que derrame más sangre”.

When looking at the neutral press's view on this topic, officially neutral-oriented but allegedly funded by Germany 'El Imparcial'<sup>210</sup> compared the new Polish Kingdom to the Napoleonic-era Duchy of Warsaw, but, surprisingly, the newspaper's editors did not refer to the other Polands [remaining in Germany and Austria-Hungary]<sup>211</sup>, whereas 'La Época' mentioned "a diminished Poland"—similarly as Sofía Casanova did, when she referred to "little" of Poland<sup>212</sup>—and claimed Europe needed a united Poland comprising all the Polish lands<sup>213</sup>.

The emphasis on unity or reunion, instead of only independence, across many Spanish commentators of the Polish question is significant and tells us that in Spain's public opinion, the term "Poland", even though often used by press commentators to refer to Russian (Congress) Poland only, in reality, was often understood as the Polish people across the three partitioning Empires.

### **The Polish Soldiers' Recruitment as the Catch of the November 5 Proclamation**

Many of the texts in the Spanish press referring to the November 5 Proclamation related or unrelated the political decision behind the proclamation to the German and Austrian need to recruit Polish soldiers from occupied Russian Poland due to the current status of the war.

However, the facts are that on November 9, only four days after the November 5 Proclamation, von Beseler proclaimed the volunteer recruitment for the *Polnische Wehrmacht*, a new Polish army that would be integrated in the Kaiser's Army. In relation to this, it must be explained that on neutrally-oriented conservative newspaper 'La Época' a press note from Zurich appeared on December 28, 1916, with the following text: "In Zurich it is reported that the German recruitment in Poland has constituted a true failure, since only 200 volunteers have been gathered in the whole Polish territory. In the capital only 67 volunteers showed up"<sup>214</sup>.

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<sup>210</sup> C. Barreiro Gordillo, "España y la Gran Guerra a través de la prensa", *op. cit.*, p.161-182; p. 174.

<sup>211</sup> 'El Imparcial': 18.11.1916 p. 1; 17.11.1916, p. 1; 8.11,1916 p. 1, 28.12.1916, p. 3.

<sup>212</sup> 'ABC en Rusia. La desilusión de Polonia', 'ABC', 3.12.1916, p. 3.

<sup>213</sup> La independencia de la Polonia rusa, 'La Época', 7.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>214</sup> "Notas varias", 'La Época', 28.12.1916, p. 2.

The exact same note appeared on the pro-allied newspaper ‘La Correspondencia de España’ one day later<sup>215</sup>. According to Andrzej Chwalba:

“in real terms, the Polish army could be ready to fight not earlier than in a few months. It was uncertain whether it would be able to take part in the war at all. The Germans did not intend to break the Hague Convention, which prohibited the recruitment of recruits in the occupied territory, but they wanted to enrol volunteers, but its numbers could not be impressive. The construction of a volunteer army required abundant financial resources and time. Neither the former nor the latter were at disposal”<sup>216</sup>.

From its allegedly non-allied and non-Germanic perspective, ‘La Época’ referred to the November 5 political project as “the Independence of Poland” but the newspaper used this terminology in the context of being this independence one of the last resources Germany had to win the war military, so, the newspaper connected the proclamation with the creation of a German-led Polish army or with the recruitment of Poles to fight under the German army<sup>217</sup>. In relation to this it is worth mentioning that, as Bueno explained in his ‘ABC’ chronicle from Warsaw, von Beseler told the foreign Journalists in Belweder Palace, just before the November 5 event, that “our enemies will say that we are only guided by the need for men for our army, but we have the consciousness of a higher thought”<sup>218</sup>. ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’ was the only newspaper among the ones examined in this research work that placed the full text of the November 5 manifesto in an article in which, citing Rome’s diplomatic circles as the source, it was also claimed that recruitment for a Polish army would start immediately<sup>219</sup>. On the same newspaper, on a text written on November 7 but published on November 16, pro-allied ‘El Heraldo’’s contributor Antonio Muñoz wondered if some Poles “had lost their minds” and argued that Poles should not be fooled by the Germans and should not want independence at

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<sup>215</sup> “Noticias de todas las procedencias. El reclutamiento en Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.12.1916, p. 1.

<sup>216</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 285-286. Original quoted text: “Realnie patrząc, armia polska mogła być gotowa do walki nie wcześniej niż za kilkanaście miesięcy. Nie było pewności, czy w ogóle będzie mogła wziąć udział w wojnie. Niemcy nie zamierzali łamać konwencji haskiej, która zakazywała poboru rekruta na terytorium okupowanym, natomiast chcieli prowadzić zaciąg ochotniczy, a ów nie mógł być imponujący. Budowa armii ochotniczej wymagała znacznych środków finansowych i czasu. Ani pierwszego, ani drugiego nie było pod dostatkiem”.

<sup>217</sup> “La crisis inglesa”, ‘La Época’, 8.12.1916, p. 1.

<sup>218</sup> “La resurrección de un reino. Varsovia en el día de la proclamación de la independencia de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 10.12.1916, p. 3-5.

<sup>219</sup> “El nuevo reino de Polonia”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 8.11.1916, p. 1.



any cost, especially not at the cost of many dead Polish soldiers<sup>220</sup>. Muñoz claimed that Polish soldiers would not be useful for Germany to win the war because they would lack motivation but as cannon fodder, they could prolongate the war 2 more years, and gave an estimation of 700.000 Polish soldiers being recruited by the Central Powers<sup>221</sup>. One should wonder how Muñoz calculated how long, by means of adding this amount of Polish soldiers to their armies, the Central Powers would be able to prolong the war.

Meanwhile, 'La Época' placed the focus on the fact that thanks to the Polish army, Germany could dedicate more troops to other fronts<sup>222</sup>, while 'El Liberal' estimated the total amount of soldiers that the Central Powers would be able to recruit in former Russian Poland. On November 12 the newspaper featured an estimation, according to which, Germany and Austria-Hungary would be able to recruit from 500.000 to 700.000 men aged 18 to 45 in the Polish Kingdom. However, not all of these men would be able to fight, the newspaper clarified<sup>223</sup>. It can be guessed that most probably the newspaper's estimation was based exclusively on demographical data, but it is difficult to determine what the accuracy level of such an estimation was. In addition, it must be also noted that the estimation of recruitable Polish soldiers by the Central Powers given by 'El Liberal' matched in its highest amount the one given by Antonio Muñoz on 'El Heraldo de Madrid' on November 16<sup>224</sup>.

Historian Piotr Wandycz claims that "a German-conducted population census revealed that the Kingdom had nearly 1.5 million men of military age, a fact that could not be easily ignored in the third year of the war"<sup>225</sup>. Meanwhile, Kisielewski does not refer to the amount of soldiers that Germans intended to recruit in former Congress Poland but mentions, within the November 5 Proclamation context, the loss by the Central Powers of 1.35 million soldiers, only in the Eastern Front, in 1916. This author adds that Ludendorff "was convinced that the creation of the Great Duchy of Warsaw from the Warsaw and Lublin regions was enough for the formation of a Polish army under German command"<sup>226</sup>. Chwalba, instead, refers to an estimation made by Beseler of the potential to recruit from the new Polish kingdom under Central Powers' control a voluntary army of "even 200.000 Polish soldiers on a peace basis and

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<sup>220</sup> "Nuevas nacionalidades, la cuestión de Polonia", "Heraldo de Madrid", 16.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>222</sup> "La independencia de la Polonia rusa", 'La Epoca', 7.11.1916, p. 1

<sup>223</sup> "El futuro ejército polaco", 'El Liberal', 12.11.1916, p. 3.

<sup>224</sup> "Nuevas nacionalidades, la cuestión de Polonia", "Heraldo de Madrid", 16.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>225</sup> P. Wandycz, *The lands of Partitioned Poland 1795-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

<sup>226</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

800000 Polish soldiers on a war basis”<sup>227</sup>. Meanwhile, historian Jacek Gzella explains that Beseler stated in a letter sent to the German chancellor, and in a memorandum written for the Kaiser, that the new Polish army under German command would have around 100000 men<sup>228</sup>.

It must be also explained that ‘El Liberal’'s focus was not only on the number of Polish soldiers, because the newspaper's editors also wondered if the Germans would recruit Polish soldiers only from the former Congress Poland lands or also from Vilna, Grodno and Kowno areas in Lithuania. However, according to the newspaper editors' interpretation of the wording in the November 9 von Beseler's recruitment appeal, the army recruitment would also include the Lithuanian lands because the appeal's text included the phrase “to the Poles [in the original text in Polish: the Polish lands] taken from the Russian domain”<sup>229</sup>. This interpretation of the November 9 appeal text is reasonable enough, even though the appeal did not give any specific clues about whether Lithuanian lands were included in the new Polish Kingdom created by Germany and Austria-Hungary, or not. Therefore, one cannot be certain this interpretation is correct.

It must be added that on the same newspaper, on November 20, international law expert and columnist Camilo Barcia Trelles raised a very interesting point when arguing that the manifesto read by Beseler on November 5, announcing the creation of a new Polish kingdom “alluded to the Polish army's glorious past and excited the Polish people to resume that tradition by joining their efforts to these of the Central Empires”<sup>230</sup>. In other words, we can interpret that Barcia Trelles argued that on November 5 Beseler used this wording because he was already trying to persuade Poles to volunteer for the Polish army under German command he intended to create, and whose creation and recruitment he officially communicated to Poles on November 9.

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<sup>227</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, op. cit. p.280. Original quoted text: „nawet 200-tysiecznej armii polskiej na stopie pokojowe i 800-tysiecznej na stopie wojennej”.

<sup>228</sup> J. Gzella, *Władysław Studnicki-Ojciec Duchowy Aktu 5 listopada*, [in] : *Akt 5 listopada 1916 roku i jego konsekwencje dla Polski i Europy*, Toruń 2016, p. 35.

<sup>229</sup> “El futuro ejército polaco”, ‘El Liberal’, 12.11.1916, p. 3. Originally in Polish the appeal's whole sentence was “Monarchowie sprzymierzonych mocarstw, Niemiec i Austro-Węgier, oznajmili wam swe postanowienie utworzenia z ziem polskich, wyzwolonych z pod jarzma rosyjskiego, nowego samodzielnego Królestwa Polskiego” which translates into English as “The monarchs of the allied powers, Germany and Austria-Hungary, have announced to you their decision to create from the Polish lands, liberated from the Russian yoke, a new independent Kingdom of Poland”.

<sup>230</sup> “La independencia sintomática”, ‘El Liberal’, 20.11.1916, p. 3.

Moreover, according to pro-allied 'La Correspondencia de España', the Polish army created by Austria and Germany would be made up of prisoners<sup>231</sup> because the Russians had already recruited all the Poles who were able to fight. The newspaper found other examples of comparable situations in which the Germans had created or supported the creation of an army with soldiers from "Allied" territories: it referred to the German aid to Roger Casement for the Irish Easter Rising and the German-Turkish usage of Indian British Sipahi Soldiers surrendered in the siege of Kut Al Amara or imprisoned in Flanders<sup>232</sup>.

It is important to remark that among the most read Spanish newspapers in 1916, only Germanophile "La Acción" did not refer to German strategic or military-related reasons for the creation of the Polish kingdom, and instead, this newspaper only claimed that Poles wanted to have their own army to defend their new country<sup>233</sup>.

When looking for scholars' comments on the question of the intended Polish soldier recruitment and Polish reactions to it, we see that according to Kisielewski, "the Poles understood the essential weaknesses of the November 5 Proclamation, so they approached it with furthest abstinence"<sup>234</sup>, which can be connected to the fact, that the same as many Poles, numerous Spanish press contributors, not only the Germanophile ones, also understood the weaknesses of the November 5 Proclamation.

Kisielewski also underlines that only four days after the proclamation, Beseler announced the creation of the Polish army made up of volunteers subdued to the German army because "[...]Germany was in a hurry to take advantage of it [the November 5 proclamation]"<sup>235</sup>.

However, Polish historian Andrzej Chwalba interprets German intentions in a different way than most 1916 international affairs commentators in the Spanish press and also differently than other historians. He claims that the main reason for the creation of the Polish Kingdom was actually economic. The main German motivation was, according to this author, the plan to

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<sup>231</sup> So, according to 'La Correspondencia de España', this Polish army would not be made up of Poles non recruited by Russia living in Russian Poland. By Russian prisoners, did they mean only from "Russian" prisoners already taken or also from prisoners also still to be taken from Russia in the eastern front fights?

<sup>232</sup> "El futuro ejército polaco", 'El Liberal', 12.11.1916, p. 3.

<sup>233</sup> "Francia y Polonia. Busilis", 'La Acción', 23.11.1916, p. 2.

<sup>234</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibidem*.

send Polish workers to Germany to reinforce “Germany’s war economy”, rather than the creation of a Polish-soldier-made army<sup>236</sup>.

In regard to the German plans to send Polish workers to Germany mentioned by Chwalba, it is also worth highlighting that on November 18, 1916, ‘El Liberal’ reproduced the words by Wojciech Trąpczyński, Polish deputy in the German Reichstag, complaining about the situation of the Polish workers recruited in Polish lands by Germany in order to send them to work in the country’s industry and agriculture. In reference to Trąpczyński’s complaint, ‘El Liberal’ ’s editors asked the following question: “after proceeding like this [sending workers to Germany, were these really volunteers or forcedly recruited], why is Germany doing the farce of resuscitating the Kingdom of Poland?” and gave a blunt answer to that question: “to make that nation’s slavery less uncomfortable for her”<sup>237</sup>. So, from this statement it can be interpreted that the recruitment of Polish workers by Germany was already a reality before the new Polish kingdom was proclaimed. In addition, it is worth here bringing attention to the fact that ‘El Liberal’ used the word “uncomfortable” in reference to Germany’s own national consciousness, but it did not specify in relation with or towards whom. Did the editors mean uncomfortable with the Allies? Or uncomfortable with the neutral countries? Probably they referred to the latter, but maybe by means of this comment they also they referred to Poles within the Germany and Austrian partitions.

When it comes to German-Austrian motivations behind the November 5 Proclamation, it is also important to highlight that ‘El Imparcial’ listed a couple of reasons leading the Central Powers to create the Polish kingdom, which did not appear in other Spanish newspapers, such as the need to eliminate friction between Germany and Austria-Hungary and the intention to send a message to Russia. In fact, the Spanish newspaper listed all the following motivations:

“hinder the reconquest by Russia, move the Muscovites in fear that, if the war continues, peace itself cannot repair certain consequences, eliminate causes of friction between the two allied cabinets, offer the world testimony that they, and not its adversaries defend the cause of the oppressed nationalities, and dispose of the resources

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<sup>236</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 280. Original quoted words: „niemieckiej gospodarki wojennej”.

<sup>237</sup> “La gran farsa alemana. Lo que dice el diputado polaco Trompziuski”, ‘El Liberal’, 18.11.1916, p. 1.

in men more shamelessly than the Polish Russian provinces would be able to supply [...]"<sup>238</sup>.

It could be argued it was not by chance that part of these motivations for the creation of a Polish Kingdom only appeared on an allegedly neutrally-oriented newspaper.

### **International Law and the November 5 Proclamation**

International-law-related aspects of the November 5 Proclamation were mentioned and commented in the examined Spanish sources, mainly in press sources and, into a much lesser extent, in diplomatic correspondence.

In regard to references to this question on Spanish diplomatic correspondence, it is worth mentioning that on November 15, 1916 Spain's chargé d'affaires in Petrograd Garrido Cisneros reported *via* telegram that the Russian government protested against the November 5 Proclamation, among other reasons, for "the violation of international rights"<sup>239</sup>.

One could state that the third most analysed topic by Spanish press contributors and correspondents regarding the creation of a new Polish kingdom announced by means of the November 5 Proclamation, after the difference between reunion or unity and independence of Russian Poland, and the German intention to create a Polish army fighting on the Central Powers' side, was the compliance or non-compliance of the German-Austrian political project for Poland with international law, being specifically a focus topic in this case the 1907 Hague Convention.

Looking at the details of this question as seen by Spanish press contributors, it is worth highlighting that Sofia Casanova saw challenges in the field of International Law, generated by the November 5 Proclamation. In her view, this raised many questions and controversies from a legal perspective. Specifically, Casanova wondered how giving independence to a conquered and still disputed by war territory would affect international law<sup>240</sup>. Casanova argued:

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<sup>238</sup> "La Nueva Polonia", 'El Imparcial', 8.11.1916, p.1. Original quoted text: "dificultar la Reconquista por Rusia, mover a los moscovitas a temer de que, si la guerra se prolonga, la paz misma no pueda reparar ciertas consecuencias, suprimir causas de rozamiento entre los dos gabinetes aliados, ofrecer al mundo testimonio de que ellos, y no sus adversarios, defienden la causa de las nacionalidades oprimidas, disponer más desembarazadamente de los recursos en hombres, etc., que las provincias rusas serían capaces de suministrar[...]."

<sup>239</sup> AHN, H2993, 15.11.1916, Spain's chargé d'affaires in Petrograd Justo Garrido Cisneros to Spain's State Minister Amalio Gimeno y Cabañas.

<sup>240</sup> "ABC en Rusia. La desilusión de Polonia", 'ABC', 3.12.1916, p. 4.

“The act by the Central monarchs generates arduous questions of regional and international interest. Does this grant of independence to conquered disputed lands create jurisprudence? In case of Russia being successful in the war and reconquering the Vistula region, will it have the power to undo what has been done by its enemies during the ephemeral occupation?”<sup>241</sup>.

It is significant that no Spanish diplomat, and no other Spanish press correspondent or contributor, apart from Sofía Casanova, explicitly wondered what would happen, politically speaking, with the newly created Polish Kingdom if the Russians retook the Polish lands. Even without any reference to legal aspects, here it is worth referring to the fact, as it has been mentioned, that ‘ABC’'s Javier Bueno argued that fear of a possible return of Russians, in order to retake control of the Kingdom of Poland, was one of the main reasons why Poles were sceptic about the political solution offered to them by the occupying Central Powers on November 5<sup>242</sup>.

In regard to the international law implications of the November 5 proclaimed political project, while pro-allied newspaper ‘El Heraldó’ stated that Germany disregarded international treaties<sup>243</sup>, on the contrary, Germanophile newspaper ‘La Acción’ accused the French and British press of manipulation and deception for claiming Germany was breaking international law<sup>244</sup>.

In addition, while on November 7 ‘La Correspondencia de España’ claimed that the Central Powers’ decision to create a Polish Kingdom in the Polish lands conquered to Russia was not due to international-law-related aspects<sup>245</sup>, on the same day neutrally-oriented newspaper ‘La Época’ saw things in the completely opposite way and argued that Poland’s independence was precisely a way for Germans to avoid the problem of compliance with the 1907 Hague Convention, and this would allow the Central Powers to create a Polish army under their control<sup>246</sup>. A similar idea to ‘La Época’'s is seen in the other examined neutrally-oriented newspaper ‘El Imparcial’, which stated that “the rules of international law about war prisoners and military territorial occupation imposed limitations that a Polish independent government

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<sup>241</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “El acto de los Monarcas centrales implica cuestiones arduas de interés internacional y regional. ¿Sienta jurisprudencia ese otorgamiento de independencia a tierras conquistadas, pero en litigio? De triunfar en la guerra Rusia y reconquistar la región vistuliana, ¿tendría potestad para deshacer lo hecho por sus enemigos durante la ocupación efímera?”.

<sup>242</sup> “La resurrección de un reino. Lo que piensa el pueblo polaco de su reciente independencia”, ‘ABC’, 5.12.1916, p. 3.

<sup>243</sup> “La cuestión de Polonia”, ‘El Heraldó de Madrid’, 16.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>244</sup> “Francia y Polonia. Busilis”, ‘La Acción’, 23.11.1916 p. 2.

<sup>245</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 7.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>246</sup> “La independencia de la Polonia rusa”. ‘La Época’, 7.11.1916, p. 1.

would not have”<sup>247</sup>. Thus, both ‘La Época’ and ‘El Imparcial’, in a way, saw the November 5 Proclamation as a workaround that was a consequence of the existence of international law, which prevented the Central Powers from using soldiers from the territory they had occupied.

The highlight on this question in this Spanish press was provided on ‘El Liberal’ by press contributor and international law scholar Barcia Trelles. He explained that, according to international law, conquest did not imply a change of sovereignty, so, in this case, sovereignty remained in hands of the state that had it “before the hostilities”, meaning in this case, Russia. He added that “necessity does not recognize law”<sup>248</sup>, in reference to the words of German Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg in the German Parliament, at the beginning of the war, regarding the German occupation of Belgium<sup>249</sup>.

Barcia Trelles also claimed that by not recognizing the new state, neutral countries “implicitly condemned the action and added that it was “absurd thinking that [neutral countries] will recognize as such a kingdom made of lands that do not belong to the Powers that now control them”<sup>250</sup>. Barcia did not refer to Spain’s stand towards the creation of the Polish Kingdom, but we can understand that he included his country among those neutral countries that did not recognize the new Polish Kingdom and, therefore, condemned the November 5 Proclamation.

It is certainly a good idea to check the views of Spanish press editors and contributors on the compliance with international law of German-Austrian goals in the November 5 Proclamation, against contemporary literature containing expertise on the subject. For this purpose, it has been checked that contemporary Polish historian Grzegorz Górski refers to the articles 42 and 43 of the 1907 Hague Convention being relevant for understanding any international law violation resulting from the effects of the November 5 Proclamation. According to this author, Article 42 deals with the definition of occupation of a territory by a foreign army and article 43 obliged an occupying army to guarantee a return to normal life, order and safety in the occupied territory and to respect the occupied lands’ previous to

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<sup>247</sup> “La nueva Polonia”, ‘El Imparcial’, 8. 11. 1916, p. 1.

<sup>248</sup> “Bélgica-Polonia. Not kennt kein Gebot”, ‘El Liberal’, 26.12.1916, p. 2.

<sup>249</sup> The original speech text has been consulted on [https://books.google.pl/books?id=fnVy4v5pZPMC&pg=PA152&dq=belgium+necessity+knows+no+law+tuchman&lr=&as\\_brr=0&as\\_pt=ALLTYPES&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=belgium%20necessity%20knows%20no%20law%20tuchman&f=false](https://books.google.pl/books?id=fnVy4v5pZPMC&pg=PA152&dq=belgium+necessity+knows+no+law+tuchman&lr=&as_brr=0&as_pt=ALLTYPES&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=belgium%20necessity%20knows%20no%20law%20tuchman&f=false) in <http://opiniojuris.org/2009/05/18/necessity-knows-no-law/> [accessed on 14.04.2020].

<sup>250</sup> “Bélgica-Polonia. Not kennt kein Gebot”, ‘El Liberal’, 26.12.1916, p. 2.

occupation own laws, unless big obstacles for such an effort were found. In addition, Górski interprets that the situation created by the German and Austrian occupation was “provisional” and political plans like those involved in the November 5 Proclamation were not allowed by international law, namely by the aforementioned convention, because no decision with permanent effects could be taken until the transitory occupation period ended, meaning until a peace treaty after the war was reached<sup>251</sup>. Thus, it can be stated that Gorski’s argument and interpretation of the 1907 Convention supports the argumentation made by Spanish international law expert Camilo Barcia Trelles back in 1916 on the newspaper ‘El Liberal’.

However, an academic debate could take place among diplomacy historians and law historians about the temporariness of the new *status quo* generated by the November 5 Proclamation, yet keeping in mind both the lack of Germany’s and Austria’s sovereignty on the new Polish kingdom’s territory and the lack of recognition by other nations of this new political and territorial entity. Law in this case, at least into a certain extent, may be subject to interpretation.

### **The November 5 Proclamation and a Potential Separate Peace between Germany and Russia**

Spanish press commentators on international affairs also focused on the role of the Polish question in past or future peace negotiations between Germany and Russia. According to pro-allied ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’'s Manuel Bueno, “the simulation of Polish independence” created by the Central Powers in former Congress Poland was seen by experts as a result of the failed secret negotiations between the German and Russian Empires to reach a separate peace agreement<sup>252</sup>. The exact same view was held by Barcia Trelles, who also referred to the failure of German and Austrian negotiations as a cause of the political project presented on November 5<sup>253</sup>. This can be connected to the idea presented by Piotr Wandycz, that only a separate German-Russian peace, unlikely in November 1916, could lead the Germans to return Congress Poland to Russia<sup>254</sup>. In the view of Ciges Aparicio, ‘El Imparcial’'s correspondent in Paris, the leak from the German embassy in the US regarding the German persuasive contacts with Mexico to make the latter enter the war, also indicated that a negotiated peace between the Allies and

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<sup>251</sup> M. Górski, *Prawno-międzynarodowe uwarunkowania aktu 5 listopada*, [in]: *Akt 5 listopada 1916 roku i jego konsekwencje dla Polski i Europy*, op. cit., p. 422-423.

<sup>252</sup> “Francia y la Guerra. La política de los aliados”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 15.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>253</sup> “Bélgica-Polonia. Not kennt kein Gebot”, ‘El Liberal’, 26.12.1916, p. 2.

<sup>254</sup> P. Wandycz, *The lands of partitioned Poland 1795-1918*, op. cit., p. 341.



Germany based on the pre-war *status quo* would anyway include the Polish independence question<sup>255</sup>. Similarly, ‘ABC’'s correspondent in Berlin Javier Bueno interpreted that Germany might pay a compensation to Russia for taking Poland from her, as part of the separated peace negotiations between the two Empires. However, in Bueno’s opinion, the conditions for the German possession of Poland and Lithuania were the main reason why a peace agreement between Germany and Russia had not been yet attained<sup>256</sup>. In relation to this, it is also worth adding that on the same newspaper Sofía Casanova reported, using a first-hand source, that politicians from the Russian Duma’s “opposition” told her that the Central Powers intended to use Poland as an asset for peace negotiations with Russia<sup>257</sup>.

In regard to a separate peace negotiation between Russia and Germany, Kisielewski claims that the fact that in a letter to the Russian government that responded to the Russian note about the Polish question published on November 15, the French and British prime ministers used the word “component” instead of “factor” referring to the role that a “restored Polish [territorial] unity” would have in the future European balance was due to a well-thought strategy of not falling into the trap of giving Russia a pretext to leave the Allies side and negotiate a separate peace with the Central Powers<sup>258</sup>.

Kisielewski, when it comes to the views on this matter of Polish political leaders, highlights that Dmowski correctly interpreted that the German strategy of advocating in Lithuania the creation of a Polish National State was a bluff intended to push all the Poles against Russia and facilitate the Russian government the task of negotiating a separate peace with Germany<sup>259</sup>. Meanwhile, Chwalba argues that the so-called activists pressured the Germans to create a Polish kingdom “because they feared that the good moment might pass and a weakened Russia would ask for a separate peace, which would bury Polish hopes”<sup>260</sup>. As already mentioned, and as Chwalba explains, German Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg did not disregard the possibility of peace but prioritized “the creation of a satellite Polish kingdom”<sup>261</sup>.

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<sup>255</sup> “París. La mejor política”, ‘El Imparcial’, 28.12.1916, p. 3.

<sup>256</sup> “Cartas de Alemania. La Paz con Rusia”, ‘ABC’, 20.11.1916, p. 5

<sup>257</sup> “ABC en Rusia. La desilusión de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 3.12.1916, p. 3.

<sup>258</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 149.

<sup>260</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 278. Original quoted text: “obawiali się bowiem, że może minąć dobry moment i że osłabiona Rosja zwróci się o prośbę o zawarcie separatystycznego pokoju, co pogrzebie polskie nadzieje”.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “powstanie satelickiego Królestwa Polskiego”.

## Geopolitical and Strategic Aspects behind the November 5 Proclamation

Geopolitical and strategic aspects in relation with the November 5 Proclamation, its causes, and its consequences are also very visible across the analysed Spanish press sources. For instance, German Imperialism and Pan-Germanism was a recurrent topic in the analyses of the November 5 Proclamation in the pro-allied Spanish media. Both ‘El Liberal’'s international law expert Camilo Barcia Trelles and ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’'s Antonio Muñoz saw the creation of a new Polish Kingdom as contrary to Germany's strategic and geopolitical goals<sup>262</sup>, which, in Barcia Trelles's interpretation, were namely both fighting Slavism and extending Prussianism, meaning a Prussian-dominated Pan Germanism-driven control of lands located far from Prussian Germany<sup>263</sup>. In Muñoz's interpretation, these German goals pursued Germany's universal domination<sup>264</sup>.

Meanwhile, on ‘ABC’'s magazine ‘Blanco y Negro’ Angel Maria Castell argued that the Central Powers never regarded the possibility of giving sovereignty to territories within their Empires that would ask for it, since the former never considered the scenario of expanding their territories to the east as a result of the war<sup>265</sup>. This is an interesting comment that could be interpreted either as the idea that Germany never imagined itself in such a favourable position in the war to steal Polish lands from Russia, or as the fact that Germans did not intend to conquer territories on the east, which was opposite to the reality of the German Empire's ambitions. Quite surely, what Castell had in mind was the idea expressed in the first possible interpretation.

It must be also added that Camilo Barcia Trelles claimed that for Germany the creation of an “independent” Poland was just a means, a step, or a price to pay in its goal to extend what he defined as his “Prussianism”, meaning Prussian-dominated Pangermanism-driven control of lands located far from Prussian Germany, and in his view, thus creating a Polish kingdom was contradictory with Germany's goal of fighting Slavism. The author added that “Warsaw and Prague are joined by a tie, the tie of inconsistency”<sup>266</sup>. It can be interpreted that by this

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<sup>262</sup> “Bélgica-Polonia. Not kennt kein Gebot.”, ‘El Liberal’, 26.12.1916, p. 2.; nuevas nacionalidades. La cuestión de Polonia, ‘Heraldo de Madrid’, 16.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>263</sup> “Bélgica-Polonia. Not kennt kein Gebot”, ‘El Liberal’, 26.12.1916, p. 2.

<sup>264</sup> “Nuevas nacionalidades. La cuestión de Polonia”, ‘Heraldo de Madrid’, 16.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>265</sup> “Crónica de la Guerra europea”, ‘Blanco y Negro’. 19.11.1916, p. 7.

<sup>266</sup> “La última movilización. Independencia sintomática”, ‘El Liberal’, 20.11.1916, p. 3.

comment, Trelles meant that Germany, as a matter of fact, was trying to achieve exactly the same political and strategic goals both in Bohemia and in Congress Poland but Germany sent contradictory messages when comparing the German policy in both Slavic countries.

The same idea was reflected by 'El Heraldo de Madrid's Antonio Muñoz, who, claimed that tThe German idea of universal domination is against such projects [like the Polish Kingdom proclaimed on November 5, 1916 by means of the Two-Emperor Proclamation]"<sup>267</sup>.

However, it is also worth highlighting that already more than a year before the November 5 Proclamation, in an interview reported by "La Acción", renowned Spanish writer Ramón del Valle-Inclán<sup>268</sup> claimed that Poland would end up being part of a new Sacred German Roman Empire, along with other nations<sup>269</sup>. In other words, Valle Inclán believed that Germany intended to include a new Polish state within its *Mitteleuropa* project, so Germany, in the Spanish writer's view, saw an existing Poland as compatible with its imperialist goals.

When it comes to relations between Poland and Germany, it is also a good idea to explain that in 1915 as well, before the Two-Emperor proclamation, on 'El Heraldo de Madrid' Spanish Modernist writer Isaac Muñoz<sup>270</sup>, from a historical perspective, claimed that "the consequences of the Polish-Germanic fights were very diverse and had in the end an ultimate significance, because these not only deeply broke and undermined the active and safe momentum of the new nationality, but led to the crossed violence started by Germany against all the revelations of the Polish spirituality"<sup>271</sup>. However, Muñoz also referred to the German "*exterminare idioma polonicum*" as a goal to end with Poland, but he also mentioned that Prussian minister Adolf Heinrich von Arnim-Boitzenburg once claimed "the Polish soul will never be Germanized". In addition, Muñoz connected the Polish cause with Slavism in opposition to Germanism<sup>272</sup>.

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<sup>267</sup> "Nuevas nacionalidades. La cuestión de Polonia", 'Heraldo de Madrid', 16.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>268</sup> Renowned Spanish writer and playwright with a very pro-allied profile. War correspondent during the Great War for 'El Imparcial' in France (reported about the Battle of Verdun).

<sup>269</sup> "Nuestras informaciones. Don Ramón del Valle Inclán", 'La Acción', 31.07.1915, p. 2.

<sup>270</sup> 1881-1925. Spanish writer, renowned orientalist, interested in Northern Africa.

<sup>271</sup> "Círculos de la guerra. La suerte de Polonia", 'El Heraldo de Madrid', 8.07.1915, p. 1. Original quoted text: "Las consecuencias de las luchas polaco-germanas fueron muy diversas y tuvieron al fin una transcendencia definitiva, porque no solo quebrantaron y mermaron profundamente el impulso activo y seguro de la nueva nacionalidad, sino que dieron lugar a la violenta cruzada emprendida por Alemania contra todas las revelaciones de la espiritualidad polaca".

<sup>272</sup> *Ibidem*.

From all these comments we can conclude there was a clear attempt or at least consideration by the German Empire to colonize the former Russian Poland lands, if we take into account the plans for resettling Poles and the fact that Poles were recruited to work in the Reich, what resembled or followed some patterns of German colonization in Africa and Asia. As a matter of fact, Chwalba argues that the way Germany treated Poles in former Congress Poland could be compared to the way the Germans treated the indigenous habitants in their colonies overseas<sup>273</sup>. Most likely, Chwalba, when writing this statement was thinking about the German colony of South West Africa (present-day Namibia). From a Spanish point of view, it is surprising to see that the Spanish press did not reflect a bit more on this topic, but perhaps Spanish commentators, even pro-allied ones, were slightly uncomfortable about accusing Germany of unethical colonial-like practices in Poland, taking into account Spain had a strong colonial past and was still a minor colonial power in North-western Africa and Guinea, therefore potential hypocrisy or contradictory ideas could be perceived in the comment of these press contributors.

Another perspective on the motivations behind the November 5 Proclamation was shown by one of 'El Debate's' most outstanding contributors, high staff military Francisco Martín Llorente (using the pseudonym Armando Guerra), who indicated a military or strategic reason for Germany's creation of a Polish kingdom: Germans realized they should attack in direction southeast towards Romania and Bessarabia and a Polish state would allow them to do so, because it would create an eastern north-eastern barrier on which the Russians would collide<sup>274</sup>. No other Spanish press contributor or correspondent made a similar observation.

Another geopolitical aspect commented in the Spanish press regarding the November 5 Proclamation was what the potential geopolitical role in Europe of the new Polish kingdom would be. 'La Correspondencia de España' argued that the new Polish kingdom created by Germany and Austria-Hungary could not play the role that an independent Poland, "a political necessity of Europe" should play, meaning as a peace keeper, because of this new kingdom not being a reunited Poland including lands from the three Partitioned areas of the former Polish state<sup>275</sup>. Therefore, we can conclude that in the newspaper editors' view, the November 5 Proclamation did not contribute to the goal of Poland functioning as a peace maker, even if there was an independent Poland, because Poland was not reunited. In other words, only reunion

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<sup>273</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 236.

<sup>274</sup> "La situación militar", 'El Debate', 7.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>275</sup> "Polonia", 'La Correspondencia de España', 7.11.1916, p. 1.

would give Poland this peace-making geopolitical function. It is also worth highlighting that the emphasis on unity or reunion, instead of only a focus on independence, across many Spanish press editors and contributors the Polish question, is significant and tells us that in Spain the term “Poland”, even though often used during the Great War period by journalists and columnists to refer to Russian (Congress) Poland only, in reality often meant the Polish people across the three partitioning Empires.

It is also worth underlining, in regard to geopolitics within the November 5 Proclamation context, that on November 7, 1916 ‘El Debate’'s Francisco Martín Llorente compared Spain's and Poland's geopolitical realities in the following way:

“Giving freedom to Poland means creating a new enemy for the Russians and creating a waterfront on which tomorrow the first waves of Muscovites marching east [he meant West] will crash. Who something wants, something it costs him... Spain, overlooking the Mediterranean and the Atlantic can offer something and something can be given”<sup>276</sup>.

We should interpret this quote as the claim that the price the new Poland would pay for its independence would be having to fight the Russians. The comment becomes prophetic when one thinks of the Polish-Soviet War and the Bolshevik attempt to win this armed conflict in order to extend Bolshevism by advancing to the West, which occurred around 4.5 years after Llorente's words. In addition, here we see criticism of Spanish neutrality, based on the argument that Spain could benefit from taking part in the war on the Central Powers' side, and could improve its geopolitical situation, given that it was a country with access to two seas (and with colonies in Northern Africa and Guinea), the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, which the Central Powers, particularly the Ottoman Empire and Germany, aimed at controlling in their dispute with Great Britain.

In addition, when we look again at the reasons for the creation of the Polish Kingdom, overall, Germans probably were much more motivated by the idea of having a buffer zone in the east protecting them from Russians than by the creation of a Polish army. Economic reasons might have been secondary. In my view, Poland, as an independent state, was going to be very useful for the Germans as a buffer state, not only during the war but in the long term, so, if

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<sup>276</sup> “La situación militar”, ‘El Debate’, 7.11.1916, p.1. Original quoted text: “Dar la libertad a Polonia es crear un nuevo enemigo a los rusos, y un muelle donde mañana vendrán a estrellarse las primeras oleadas de moscovitas en su marcha hacia Oriente. El que algo quiere, algo le cuesta... España, asomada al Mediterráneo y al Atlántico, algo puede ofrecer y algo le pueden dar”.

possible, they (German government, army, Kaiser) would never intend to give former Congress Poland back to Russia, not even as the result of a separate peace, as we can see later in the 1918 Brest-Litovsk Treaty. The buffer zone argument for the creation of the Polish Kingdom is supported by Beseler's words to Polish leaders in the occupied lands, as quoted by Chwalba, "we announced Polish independence not for your good, but for German interest. We need a closure from Russia's side"<sup>277</sup> and is also supported by Bethmann Hollweg's words in a letter to Wilhem II on 23 January 1916, also quoted by Chwalba: "we did not conquer Poland to liberate it, but to create a defensive barrier against Russia"<sup>278</sup>. In relation to this, it must be highlighted that on November 7, 1916 'La Correspondencia de España' stated that "Poland, [...] would serve as a buffer state, which would prevent further clashes between the Slavic world and the German world"<sup>279</sup>. A similar view with different connotations is found on the other side of the Spanish ideological spectrum of the time, on Germanophile 'La Acción', which, from a geopolitical perspective, argued that Poland was essentially anti-Russian due to its geographical location, since it was the fortress defending European civilization in the East. The Catholic Germanophile newspaper added that Poland's geographical location explained why Galician and Poznań Poles had been respected and treated like citizens by Austrians, and Germans, despite Protestantism, unlike what the Russians had done, trying to erase Polish culture<sup>280</sup>. In this article there were not any references to the Germanization process suffered by Poles in the German Partition, thus showing that the article's main goal was to convey a positive image of the Central Powers as Poland's saviours.

### **Timing of Polish Independence as a Result of the November 5 Proclamation**

Another of the aspects regarding the creation of a Polish Kingdom as a result of the November 5 Proclamation that generated interpretation divergences across the examined Spanish newspaper was the Central Powers' suggested or established timeline for the launch of

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<sup>277</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 282. Original quoted text: "my ogłosiliśmy niepodległość Polski nie dla waszego dobra, ale dla interesu niemieckiego. Potrzebujemy zamknięcia od strony Rosji".

<sup>278</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 278. Original quoted text: "Nie zdobyliśmy Polski po to aby ja oswobodzić, lecz w celu stworzenia bariery ochronnej przeciwko Rosji".

<sup>279</sup> "Polonia", 'La Correspondencia de España', 7.11.1916, p. 1. Original quoted words: "Polonia, [...] serviría de Estado tapón, que impediría nuevos choques entre el mundo eslavo y el mundo germano".

<sup>280</sup> "Polonia", 'La Acción', 8.11.1916, p. 3.

the new Polish entity. When was the Polish independent Kingdom under German-Austrian control proclaimed by the Central Powers supposed to be effective? Immediately, later during the war or after the war? We can see different interpretations of this aspect in the Spanish press. While ‘El Debate’ pointed out that the new Polish state should be confirmed as soon as the war ended and peace would be agreed among the nations in war<sup>281</sup>, ‘ABC’'s Bueno reckoned the November 5 Proclamation would have consequences in the short term<sup>282</sup> and ‘La Acción’ saw (Congress, Russian) Poland already as a new independent nation even though the Germanophile newspaper did not use the terms *de jure*, *de facto* or any other legal reference to describe the new Polish Kingdom's status<sup>283</sup>.

### **Poland-Spain Comparisons in the Context of the November 5 Proclamation**

Across all the comments in the Spanish press reflecting on the November 5 Proclamation, we can find a series of comparisons between Spain and Poland, and even references to Poland to refer to Spanish matters. For instance, ‘El Liberal’ claimed that:

“Poland is a great people, very heroic, very crazy, very adventurous, very gentlemanly, very similar to Spain in its love of quixotic ventures, and which deserves, for the prestige of its legend, for the greatness of its soul, for the footprint that has left in European civilization, to figure among the great free powers of the West”<sup>284</sup>.

In addition, on November 8 Germanophile and conservative ‘La Acción’'s editors regarded the November 5 Proclamation as a true liberation and resurrection of Poland and claimed that Spaniards should be happy that the “slave fellow country” would gain its freedom. In addition, the conservative newspaper's editors argued that contemporary Spain should look at Polish history for lessons on how to avoid going through what the Poles had experienced since late 18th century, by means of “resisting” to bad politicians and to the “strange mediatization” caused by bad politicians<sup>285</sup>. Taking into account ‘La Acción’'s ideological alignment, we might interpret that the latter idea, in the author's view, could be referring to pro-

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<sup>281</sup> “La independencia de Polonia”, ‘El Debate’, 18.08.1916, p. 1.

<sup>282</sup> “La resurrección de un reino. Varsovia en el día de la proclamación de la independencia de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 10.12.1916, p. 3-5.

<sup>283</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Acción’, 8.11.1916, p. 3.

<sup>284</sup> “La Gran Farsa de Polonia. Lo que buscan los prusianos”, ‘El Liberal’, 12.11.1916, p. 1. Original quoted text: “Polonia es un gran pueblo muy heroico, muy loco, muy aventurero, muy caballeroso, muy parecido a España en su amor de las empresas quijotescas y que merece, por el prestigio de su leyenda, por la grandeza de su alma, por la huella que ha dejado en la civilización europea, figurar entre las grandes potencias libres del Occidente”.

<sup>285</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Acción’, 8.11.1916, p. 3.

liberal propaganda and manipulation in the media, not only on internal issues but also regarding Spain's position towards the war and the world.

Last but not least, it is worth mentioning that the November 5 Proclamation even had an (anecdotal) impact on Spain's internal political issues, more exactly on the way these were presented in the press: on November 13, 1916 neutrally-oriented newspaper "El Imparcial" included a caricature featuring the leader of Spain's Reformist Party Melquíades Álvarez<sup>286</sup>, claiming that he would offer his services to the new Poland's chief of state<sup>287</sup>. We should interpret this drawing as a reference to the fact that the reformist party's policies were not applicable in Spain or were not popular enough among Spaniards, thus this party would have more chances to apply its political ideas in the new Polish Kingdom, a new state where theoretically many reformist policies had to be implemented in order to boost development.

## Conclusions

When attempting to conclude this crucial subchapter of the dissertation, it must be said, first of all, that the November 5 Proclamation significantly contributed to internationalize the Polish question in Spain. The number of press articles in Spain dedicated to Polish affairs increased after the proclamation, at least among the examined press sources. Newspapers' editorial staff and contributors who until then did not write about the Polish question started doing so. Secondly, it can be noted that the most important reactions to the November 5 Proclamation in the examined Spanish press sources are not surprising or unexpected when we look at them from the pro-German vs. pro-allied polarization that dominated the Spanish newspapers during the Great War. In fact, while Germanophile newspapers wrote about the liberation and rebirth of Poland and regarded this as an important event in history and the war, pro-Entente newspapers regarded the November 5 Proclamation as something false, not authentic, unreal, that was due to Germany's own goals and needs in the war. The pro-Entente newspapers mostly placed their need to criticise the Central Powers in front of their sympathies for Poland. Thirdly, Spanish newspapers also analysed the German and Austrian motivations to create an independent Poland from the military, strategic and geopolitical points of view, above all.

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<sup>286</sup> Spanish politician, congressman, founder in 1912 of the Reformist Party and its leader since 1917 until the beginning of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship in 1923. Spain's History Academy: <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/2133> [accessed 20.05.2023]

<sup>287</sup> "El kilométrico de D.Melquiades", 'El Imparcial', 13.11.1916, p. 1.



In addition, it is clear that German propaganda in Poland, as also into a certain extent reflected in the examined Spanish sources, way before the November 5 Proclamation, probably since the Central Powers' occupation of Russian Poland in August 1915, intended to encourage soldiers' recruitment in the Polish lands for the moment when the declaration was to be announced. Such a project, however, ended up in a clear failure.

Last but not least, the proclamation made that a prospect of a more or less full Polish independence became at least a more tangible and likely result of the war in the eyes of most Spanish newspapers and their contributors.

## Spain and the 1918 Brest-Litovsk Treaties

Two peace treaties were negotiated and signed in the Russian Polish town of Brest-Litovsk in February and March 1918, respectively, that affected the future of the Polish question, directly and indirectly. The first one, signed on February 9, reflected an agreement between the Central Powers and Ukraine, the second one, signed on March 3, was agreed between the Central Powers and Soviet Russia. Both treaties, but particularly the one with Ukraine, had many echoes on the examined Spanish press sources.

As Polish historian Janusz Pajewski explains, Jan Kucharzewski's Regency Kingdom government worked for obtaining a representation in the Brest negotiations and he even travelled to Berlin for this purpose, without success. In addition, German leaders argued that Poland did not fight in the war, so it couldn't be an active part in the negotiations<sup>288</sup>. In addition, the trip of the three regents to meet the two emperors in Berlin in Vienna can also be described as useless or unsuccessful. What matters here is that in the end Polish representatives were not invited to the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, in which Poland was not a political subject. More importantly, as per the March 3 Treaty, Russia yielded the Central Power-occupied Polish lands of former Russian Poland (kingdom), that were to remain under occupation by Central Powers, except for the Chełm region, Zamość and southern Podlasie (Podlaquia) that were assigned to Ukraine in the previous treaty signed with Ukrainian Central Council on February 9. Polish protests against the Central Powers and against loyalists were enormous in all the Polish lands in the aftermath of the Brest-Litovsk treaties<sup>289</sup>.

Spain's Ambassador in Berlin Luis Polo de Bernabé wrote a report for the Ministry of State on February 15, 1918, reporting that "the Polish government" had resigned due to the Central Powers' decision to assign the Chłem district<sup>290</sup> to Ukraine, and also that German "public opinion" was concerned about a possible conflict between Poland and the Central Powers. He added that part of the German press criticised the German government and asked for opposition against Poles<sup>291</sup>. On his next report related to the Polish question, on March 11, 1918, Polo de Bernabé described the consequences which the Brest-Litovsk Treaty had had for

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<sup>288</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

<sup>289</sup> See: *Ibidem*, p. 229-235; A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 330-340; T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 184-191.

<sup>290</sup> In most of the examined Spanish primary sources the word "Cholm" was used to refer to this region.

<sup>291</sup> AHN, H2605, 15.02.1918, Spanish ambassador in Germany Luis Polo de Bernabé to Spain's Ministry of State Eduardo Dato.

the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Namely, he referred to the Polish-Ukrainian territorial conflict resulting from the treaty. Spain's ambassador highlighted that:

“the definition of the borders of Ukraine to the west has generated a great discontent among Poles. These want that this line reaches the Bug river, as it was determined in the 1815 Congress of Vienna. The fact that a great number of Ukrainians live to the West of this line is not considered by them in the scales”<sup>292</sup>.

In relation to this idea regarding the borders between the Kingdom and Ukraine, it is worth highlighting that on Aug 22 1915, Spanish Germanophile newspaper ‘El Debate’ had claimed that Germans would control the Bug river and would “rectify the political borders of the former kingdom of Poland”, in a reference to the borders of the Poland resulting from the Congress of Vienna in 1815<sup>293</sup>. In 1915, ‘El Debate’'s editors might have read sources indicating that Germany and Austria were already planning what happened two and a half years later in the “Ukrainian” Brest-Litovsk treaty, meaning lands being taken away from the Kingdom in favour of Ukraine. What is clear is that, due to the Chełm question, and because of Poland not being a subject in the March Brest-Litovsk Treaty, as Kisielewski claims, Brest-Litovsk was a “blow” for those Polish activist politicians that still by then believed in a political solution for Poland along with Germany and Austria-Hungary<sup>294</sup>.

Spain's ambassador in Berlin also referred to the resignation of two Polish ministers in the Austrian government, and to the confrontation between Austrian Senate and Reichstag Polish deputies and Austrian minister-president Ernst Seidler von Feuchtenegg. The ambassador added that all the Slavic politicians opposed Seidler and concluded that “the situation is severe, because it is not caused by a government, but by the very constitution of the Empire”. The Spanish diplomat correctly foresaw that this situation resulting from the Central Powers' treaty with Ukraine could contribute to the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire<sup>295</sup>. In relation to this, Pajewski highlights the fact that the Chełm question made that

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<sup>292</sup> AHN, H1338, 11.03.1918, Spanish ambassador in Germany Luis Polo de Bernabé to Spain's Ministry of State Eduardo Dato. Original quoted text: “La demarcación de los límites de la Ucrania hacia occidente han despertado gran descontento entre los polacos. Pretenden que Polonia alcanza hasta la línea del río Bug, como fue determinado en el congreso de Viena en 1815. El que al occidente de esa línea habitan gran número de ucranianos no pesa para ellos en la balanza”.

<sup>293</sup> “Impresiones del día. De la política y la vida”, ‘El Debate’, 22.08.1915, p. 1.

<sup>294</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i niepodległość Polski 1914-1918*, op. cit., p. 189.

<sup>295</sup> AHN, H1338, 11.03.1918, Spanish ambassador in Germany Luis Polo de Bernabé to Ministry of State Eduardo Dato. Original quoted text: “la situación es grave, porque no es determinada por un gabinete, sino por la constitución misma del imperio”.

one of the nations within the Empire could determine the interior political and territorial reality of the whole Dual Monarchy and the author sees this as Ottokar Czernin's mistake<sup>296</sup>. In fact, it would not be too risky to argue that the Brest-Litovsk treaty with Ukraine, even if its territorial concessions were finally not applied, was one of the factors leading to the beginning of the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The Spanish press placed a great emphasis on Polish protests regarding the Central Powers' assignment of the Chełm region to Ukraine in the Brest-Litovsk treaty. First of all, It is surprising to read that mistakenly 'La Correspondencia de España's editors claimed that the regions of Kielce and Lublin were given to Ukraine by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk<sup>297</sup>. That would have meant that most of the Austrian-occupied Russian Poland was given to Ukraine. A lack of geographical knowledge on the Polish Kingdom might have been the reason for such a mistake. On March 1, 1918, 'El Debate's Llorente claimed that: "[...] it is claimed that the whole Poland has been declared in a war state. If this is like this, the little line that the diplomats drew, and that they will be forced to delete, when drawing the border between Ukraine and Poland is to blame"<sup>298</sup>. On March 5 1918, 'El Imparcial' also referred to the territorial conflict between Poland and Ukraine resulting from the February 9 treaty. The newspaper's editors, which regarded Ukraine as an "already free state" argued that "when Austria recognized the independence of the former Russian province, the territories were delimited and a piece of Poland was added to Ukraine. This generated some exaltation in Poland that, without becoming turbulences, made the [German and Austrian] diplomats [see] their mistake. Poles follow a different faith than Ukrainians, since a long time ago there are quarrels between one and another races, the union was apolitical[...]"<sup>299</sup>. 'El Imparcial' also claimed that "the agreement has been fast, because the negotiations to make Ukraine give up the part of Poland that had been assigned to must have been now completed" and the newspaper concluded that for Ukraine taking a part of ethnically Polish territory would be more a problem rather than something beneficial since

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<sup>296</sup> J. Pajewski, *Pierwsza Wojna Światowa 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 652.

<sup>297</sup> "Polonia y Ucrania", 'La Correspondencia de España', 16.02.1918, p. 1.

<sup>298</sup> "La situación militar", 'El Debate', 1.03.1918, p. 1. Original quoted text: "[...]Y se asegura que Polonia entera ha sido declarada en estado de sitio. Si así es, cúlpese a esa rayita que los diplomáticos trazaron, y que tendrán que borrar, al dibujar la frontera entre Ucrania y Polonia".

<sup>299</sup> "La situación militar. La paz con Rusia. Alto en el camino. Polonia y Ucrania. En los otros frentes", 'El Imparcial', 5.03.1918, p.2. Original quoted text: "Cunado Austria reconoció la independencia de la antigua provincia rusa, se delimitaron los territorios y un pedazo de Polonia fue adicionado a Ucrania. Esto produjo alguna excitación en Polonia, que, sin llegar a turbulencias, hizo comprender a los diplomáticos el error. Los polacos profesan una religión diferente a los ucranianos; de muy antiguo existen rencillas entre una y otra raza, la unión era impolítica[...]"

the new Ukrainian state already had other difficulties to face<sup>300</sup>. It seems that while ‘El Imparcial’ recognized Chełm and southern Podlasie (Podlaquia) lands as part of Poland, it downplayed the issue and regarded the territorial conflict as just a diplomatic mistake.

It is worth adding that on March 11, 1918 pro-allied newspaper ‘El Sol’ published a manifesto written by Poles in Germany against the assignation of the Chełm region to Ukraine in Brest-Litovsk<sup>301</sup>. On the other hand, ‘El Debate’'s Llorente made a comparison of the Polish attitude regarding the Chełm region with Spaniards’ political attitudes and concluded that Poles generally were much more active and engaged to control territory than Spaniards. As an example, he used the situation of the Uarga Valley in the Moroccan Riff, where, according to Guerra, Spaniards did nothing to prevent France from controlling that “rich region”<sup>302</sup>. Comparing Poland and Spain he claimed that “in Poland, the whole nation vibrates with its eyes fixed on a narrow area of land, here we give a fig that neighbours and friends eat the meat and leave us the Riffian bones”<sup>303</sup>.

However, ‘ABC’'s correspondent in Berlin Javier Bueno did not regard the Poles’ attitude towards the Chełm question in the Brest-Litovsk Treaty as something positive. On a text published on March 27, 1918, earlier mentioned because Fajans sent a complain about it to the newspaper, Bueno criticized Poles for complaining about the Brest-Litovsk Treaty between the Central Powers and Ukraine that left some Polish lands in Ukrainian territory. However, his comments went beyond Polish reactions to Brest-Litovsk: Bueno accused Poles of not being thankful to the Central Powers, which had given them independence, and also accused Poles of expecting others to give them independence instead of fighting for their independence on their own. He argued: “Poles, who without the war, would still be under the whip of Russian Tsarism, want to change from being a slaved nation to a tyrant one”<sup>304</sup>, and added:

“What did Poles do to become independent? Nothing. their resurrection as nation is not due to their own effort and without the Germans they would have brought the Russian chain for a longer time. True, Poles are rebellious, from time to time they organize something, in their clubs they talked about the superiority of their race over the others, of their traditions, but mass uprisings and sacrifice were placed for a better

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<sup>300</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>301</sup> “Los polacos protestan contra la cesión de Cholm, un manifiesto”, ‘El Sol’, 11.03.1918, p. 6.

<sup>302</sup> Martín Llorente meant that in 1912 the region was included in the French protectorate area and not on the Spanish protectorate area of Morocco.

<sup>303</sup> “La situación militar”, ‘El Debate’, 19.03.1918, p. 1.

<sup>304</sup> “ABC en Alemania. Las reclamaciones de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 27.03.1918. p. 3-4.

occasion. Maximum they made a small war, low, in a hidden way, they did not cross that line”<sup>305</sup>.

Bueno also stated that they rejected to fight along the Central Powers to liberate Poland, and, instead, contributed with a legion “which showed off in the streets of Warsaw but didn’t in the battlefields”. He also claimed that Poles did not cooperate with German efforts to reorganize and improve Poland’s economic situation. On the same text Bueno explained that Poles were appealing to language and ethnicity to demand the disputed lands that the Brest-Litovsk Treaty gave to Ukraine but they didn’t use these same claims to liberate themselves from Russian oppression and he stated that it wasn’t true that the disputed lands were inhabited mostly by Poles<sup>306</sup>.

The examined Spanish press sources also mentioned Poland when referring to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk between the Central Powers and Soviet Russia. On March 24 ‘El Imparcial’ featured a press note referring to the proposal by German Reichstag deputies on the political freedom of Poland, Lithuania and Courland, including the speech by German vice-chancellor on the future of these territories. It is worth mentioning that allegedly neutral but at that point funded by the German embassy ‘El Imparcial’, used in the context of Brest-Litovsk peace talks the headline “For the independence of the Russian provinces”<sup>307</sup>. It can be interpreted that the Spanish newspaper still thought about Poland as a Russian province. On January 26 ‘La Correspondencia de España’ argued that the Central Powers “requested the annexation of Poland, Lithuania, Livonia, Courland, Riga and the isles of Moon and Sound with the goal of conducting an economic policy to suffocate Russia”<sup>308</sup>. The newspaper, on the same page, included Hertling’s speech responding to Wilson’s plan, and included the German chancellor’s comments on Wilson’s point 13<sup>309</sup>. ‘El Liberal’, meanwhile, argued that “the Allies are not

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<sup>305</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “ ¿Qué han hecho los polacos para independizarse? Nada, a su propio esfuerzo no se debe su resurrección como pueblo, y sin los alemanes, habrían llevado al cuello aún por mucho tiempo la cadena rusa. Ciertamente, los polacos son rebeldes, de tiempo en tiempo organizaban algaradas, en sus Clubs hablaban de la superioridad de su raza sobre las otras, de sus tradiciones; pero levantamiento en masa y sacrificios los dejaban para mejor oportunidad. A lo más que llegaban era a hacer una guerra pequeña, baja, a escondidas; de ahí no pasaban ”.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>307</sup> “Por la independencia de las provincias rusas”, ‘El Imparcial’, 24.03.1918, p. 3.

<sup>308</sup> “¿maniobra?”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 26.01.1918, p. 1.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibidem*. Originally quoted text of Hertling’s speech: “It was not the Entente, which did not have for Poland more than empty words, and which before the war never defended Poland from Russia, but the German Empire and Austria-Hungary were those who liberated Poland and its nation of the oppressing yoke of the tsarist regime.

trying to impose the Muscovite yoke to Finland, Ukraine, Lithuania or Poland” but, it added that at the same time, the Allies were opposing that the Central Empires and the Russian maximalists ”subdue these nations to a more terrible and painful slavery”<sup>310</sup>. In other words, ‘El Liberal’ argued that Eastern European nations would be in a worse situation under Austrian-German domination than under Russian domination, so, it can be interpreted that ‘El Liberal’ justified Poland not being completely independent from Russia, but at the same time the newspaper condemned a Poland that would be not completely independent from Germany. However, it is important to specify that “El Liberal” referred to a republican non-revolutionary Russia. This can give us an idea that the newspaper still hoped for Russia to go back to the pre-October revolution *status quo*. It must also be noted that most Spanish newspapers used the term Russian “maximalism” and not “Bolshevism” or “reds” or “Soviets” in relation to those ruling Russia at the time of the Brest-Litovsk treaties in early 1918.

In the Spanish press comments regarding the Brest-Litovsk treaties we find many references to the geopolitical reality in Central and Eastern Europe before, during, and after the treaties. In their analyses, many Spanish newspapers referred to the German conception of controlling its eastern neighbouring territories as part of the *Mitteleuropa* plan, although they did not use the term *Mitteleuropa* explicitly and, instead, Spanish press commentators of the international affairs used Germanism, Pangeranism as well as German Imperialism and expansionism. For instance, in March 1918 neutrally oriented newspaper ‘La Época’ interpreted that, geopolitically speaking, two buffer zones had appeared between Germany and Russia, the first one made up of Poland, Lithuania and Courland, and the second one by Letonia, Estonia and Finland. The newspaper claimed that “Russian maximalism costed the country a territory bigger than twice the size of Spain”<sup>311</sup>. From a geopolitical point of view, Pajewski also argues that the Treaty with Ukraine was also part of the wider German strategy to control the potential commercial route between Berlin and Bagdad because it helped keeping Russians away from the Bosforus and the Balkans<sup>312</sup>. On January 26, 1918 ‘El Sol’ referred to Germany asking Russia for the annexation of a great part of former Western Russia from the Baltic through

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Let Germany, Austria-Hungary and Poland agree on the future constitution of this country. We are, as last year’s negotiations and declarations prove, on our way to achieve this”.

<sup>310</sup> “Lo del día”, ‘El Liberal’, 20.03.18, p. 3.

<sup>311</sup> “Ecos del día”, ‘La Época’, 28.03.1918, p. 1.

<sup>312</sup> J. Pajewski, *Pierwsza Wojna Światowa 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 649.

Poland and to Bessarabia<sup>313</sup>. Meanwhile, in February 1918 'La Época' forecasted that Germany would subtly make of Poland and Russia its "protectorate"<sup>314</sup>.

It is a fact that on the Western flank of the deceased Russian Empire, Germany attempted, by taking advantage of its military occupation, to weaken and diminish the new Russia by means of the two Brest-Litovsk treaties that broke her down in smaller states. In relation to this aspect of Germany's eastern policy, on January 21, 1918, 'El Sol's' correspondent in Paris Corpus Barga presented a very meaningful comparison to his readers: The Spanish journalist compared the German policy towards Eastern Europe and Russia in the context of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations with the foreign policy conducted by Richelieu's France towards Germany in the 17th century that led to the Treaties of Westphalia. According to Barga, in the same way that in Westphalia France disintegrated the German lands in many kingdoms, now Germany was trying to disintegrate the Russian lands, namely the lands between core Russia and Germany in many states and nationalities, including Courland, Poland, Lithuania, by promoting the concept of the liberty of nations<sup>315</sup>. It is worth noting that Janusz Pajewski perceives in Brest-Litovsk negotiations "[...]an antagonism between the stand of the Russians, who wanted peace without annexations and reparations, and the German desire to control Poland, Lithuania, Courland and Inflanty"<sup>316</sup>, while Piotr Wandycz argues that the Bolsheviks did not intend to let the lands of the Russian Empire to decompose in many separate nations despite their Declaration of the rights of the Peoples of Russia<sup>317</sup>.

It is also worth mentioning another aspect of Polish reactions to the treaties that was visible in a post-Brest-Litovsk context of social and political unrest in the Polish kingdom, pointed out on July 29, 1918 by 'La Correspondencia de España': the newspaper forecasted a Polish uprising against the German occupiers. 'La Correspondencia de España' argued that "Ukraine is in full rebellion and Lithuania, Estonia and Poland await, to uprise [against Germany], a favourable moment"<sup>318</sup>. Although such uprising eventually did not take place, as Chwalba explains, Brest-Litovsk redirected the hopes of former pro-Austrian activists and

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<sup>313</sup> "Política internacional. El discurso del conde de Hertling. Contestación a Lloyd George y Wilson". 'El Sol', 26.01.1918, p. 1.

<sup>314</sup> "Ecos del Día", 'La Época', 22.02.1918, p. 1.

<sup>315</sup> "Nuestras crónicas de París, Imitación de Francia. La política alemana en Rusia", 'El Sol', 21.I.1918, p. 1.

<sup>316</sup> J. Pajewski, *Pierwsza Wojna Światowa 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 637. Original quoted text: „[...] sprzeczność pomiędzy stanowiskiem Rosjan, którzy żądali pokoju bez aneksji i bez odszkodowań, a niemieckimi dążeniami do opanowania Polski, Litwy, Kurlandii, Inflant”.

<sup>317</sup> P. Wandycz, *The lands of partitioned Poland 1795-1918, op. cit.*, p. 362.

<sup>318</sup> "Se van", 'La Correspondencia de España', 29.07.1918, p. 1.



other politicians from the three parts to the Western Allies and boosted the purely independentist views among them<sup>319</sup>.

One cannot skip the fact that no mentions about the status of the Chełm region are found across the examined Spanish press sources in the middle and second half of 1918. In relation to this, according to Chwalba, in summer 1918 Germany had a different view than Austria-Hungary and regarded the territorial agreements with Ukraine as still valid<sup>320</sup>. One can interpret that for Germany the benefits of the Ukrainian deal were still important in summer 1918, since this was important for the Central Powers from a strategic point of view to keep that new small nation under its control. Kisielewski explains, in relation to the conflict with Poles that the Ukrainian deal had generated for Germany and Austria-Hungary, that:

“in August 1918 Emperor Wilhelm II presented [Ferdynand] Radziwiłł the candidacy to the Warsaw throne of Karol Stefan Habsburg [Brother of Spain’s former Queen Maria Cristina, uncle of Spain’s King Alfonse 13th] from Żywiec. This was an old idea from the Cracovian conservatives taken by Vienna in 1917 as a compromise between the trialist project and the German project of a Polish kingdom that was to be trimmed by one of the German princes. Now the Germans came back to this idea with the additional incentive for the supporters of the trialist view consisting of foggy promises by Berlin that in case it was accepted, the Chełm lands come back to the Polish territory. When, at the same time, Lithuania started to withdraw from the conception of a planned Prussian-Lithuanian union by the end of August, the German offer for the Poles [in exchange for acceptance of Karol Stefan Habsburg as the King of Poland] was enriched with Wilno”<sup>321</sup>.

It is worth highlighting that Spanish pro-Entente newspaper “El Sol”, a few months before, on March 3, had already claimed the Central Powers intended to give the disputed Chełm region and Lithuania to the Kingdom of Poland, although in the case of the newspaper

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<sup>319</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>321</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 191. Original quoted text: „w sierpniu cesarz Wilhelm II przedstawił Radziwiłłowi kandydaturę na tron warszawski księcia Karola Stefana Habsburga z Żywca. Był to dawny pomysł konserwatystów krakowskich, podchwycony przez Wiedeń w 1917 roku jako kompromisowy między projektem trialistycznym a niemieckim projektem okrojonego Królestwa Polskiego rządzonego przez któregoś z książąt niemieckich. Teraz sami Niemcy powracali do tego pomysłu, a dodatkową zachętą do pozyskania dla niego także zwolenników opcji trialistycznej miały być mgliste obietnice Berlina, że w razie jego akceptacji Chełmszczyzna wróci w skład ziem polskich. Kiedy zaś Litwa zaczęła się wycofywać z koncepcji planowanej unii prusko-litewskiej, pod koniec sierpnia oferta niemiecka dla Polaków wzbogaciła się o Wilno”.

it was argued that this would be in exchange for annexations into Germany and Austria of territories from the kingdom<sup>322</sup>. In any case, the status of the disputed region was still very open and unconfirmed throughout 1918 and was never resolved by the Central Powers before the disintegration of Austria-Hungary and the German defeat in the Western front.

It can be concluded in regard to the Brest-Litovsk question, that the Spanish press, mostly pro-allied and neutrally-oriented newspapers and their contributors, very clearly echoed Polish dissatisfaction and anger with the Central Powers, particularly focused on the Chełm question and, with the exception of 'ABC's' Javier Bueno, were supportive of Poland's complaints.

### Spain and Polish political conceptions in the Great War

Beyond the war-related extremely difficult situation in the Polish lands that the Spanish correspondents described, the Polish cause was mainly played at another level, in the political front. In fact, one of the most significant goals of this thesis is to analyse how Spain's press and diplomacy interpreted the different Polish views on how Poland should become independent and on what Poland should look like in terms of borders and organization.

Precisely, this section of the dissertation's first chapter intends to analyse direct or indirect references on Spanish press articles and diplomatic correspondence to the different political movements or visions existing in Poland during the Great War, in regard to partial or complete Polish independence as a result of the war. According to Polish historian Janusz Pajewski, after the German occupation of Polish lands that were formerly in Russian hands consolidated, three political currents developed in the territories predominantly inhabited by Poles: passivists, activists and revolutionaries. The Polish historian does not include the irredentists as a separate group but regards them as part of passivism or activism<sup>323</sup>. Revolutionaries were those who prioritized the social revolution in favour of working classes above any other political idea, such as Polish independentism, so this one is the least relevant political conception both for an analysis of Spanish views on the Polish question and for an analysis of the Polish independence cause itself. In any case, no references were found to this movement and its followers in the examined Spanish press sources.

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<sup>322</sup> "Ucrania y Polonia", 'El Sol', 3.03.1918, p. 1.

<sup>323</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 109.

There were only few references in the Spanish press, and almost none on Spanish diplomatic reports from embassies in Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, France and Great Britain, to the different Polish political movements in regard to the Polish question. Even fewer references to the concepts of activism, passivism and irredentism, implicitly have been identified in the examined primary sources. Among the names of these three movements, only irredentism was mentioned explicitly in one of the sources.

On the examined press sources the focus was always on whether Poland's best interest in the war was on one side or on another. One might logically think that Spain's Germanophile newspapers, in theory, might be more positive about the Polish activist view and more critical of the passivist one. However, in practice, in the Spanish press there were not so many comments on the differences across Polish politicians towards the goal of self-government and independence, and there were way more words about the Great Powers' attitude towards Poles in the three separate 'Polands'. What is undeniable is that Germanophile newspapers praised German initiatives for Poland's self-government and pro-Entente newspapers criticized those initiatives, and, instead, emphasized the Great Duke's proclamation at the beginning of the war, and the Russian provisional government's declaration in March 1917. In fact, Spanish newspapers did not refer so much to Poles' own views on those matters.

The reality was more complex than a pure division of Polish politicians on three clearly non-mixable groups, and also changed throughout the war. This complexity is also reflected in the observations made by Spanish diplomats, mostly ambassador Polo Bernabé in Berlin and chargé d'affaires Garrido Cisneros in Petrograd, and by Spanish press contributors, about the different Polish political groups and their leaders.

## **Activism**

Activism was the view of those Poles who were in favour of a Polish political future, after the Great War, linked to the Central Powers or supported by them. Activists believed that Germany and Austria-Hungary would win the war. A few Spanish press articles about the Polish question, throughout the Great War period, were directly or indirectly related either to the activists' views or to activist leaders. Paradoxically, among the reviewed Spanish sources there are more references to the activist movement's ideas and its leaders in the neutral and pro-allied press than on the Germanophile newspapers. However, the word "activism" is not found in the examined sources with the meaning here considered.

It must be added that not only press and diplomatic sources in which there are references to the Polish activist movement have been analysed. In his early 1919 book, Polish-Spanish press contributor and later chancellor of the Spanish legation in Warsaw Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda, claimed that “in Galicia, among the higher classes, in which people were already used to the Austrian regime, which since 1860, was quite benign for the Poles, the orientation at the beginning of the war was frankly anti-Russian”<sup>324</sup>. He added that the fact that a Polish Legion was formed in Austria, although soon later dismantled, was a result of this Austrian policy towards Poles and the Austrian Poles’ attitude towards Austria<sup>325</sup>.

Polish activism originally had its stronghold in Austrian Poland, Galicia. Polish historian Andrzej Chwalba argues that in Galicia and in Cieszyn Silesia there were four outstanding political movements at the beginning of the war: “1.the loyalists, so-called Krakow conservatists and the democrats allied with them, 2.the advocates of the irredentist ideology (independentist), 3.nationalists or Podolyans from Eastern Galicia, 4.populists from PSL Piast”<sup>326</sup>. He explains that conservatives and democrats, also called trialists, had a very significant influence in Austrian politics, whereas Podolyans had a lot less power in front of Vienna, and nationalists even less. Chwalba also argues that the conservatives “had the hope that when Austrians take the Polish Kingdom including Warsaw from Russia, they adjoin it to Galicia, and together these will be the third member of the Habsburg state” what justifies the naming ‘trialists’<sup>327</sup>. In relation to trialism, it is worth indicating that towards the last stages of the war, on September 18, 1917, pro-allied newspaper ‘La Correspondencia de España’ precisely referred to the “trialistic” option for the future of former Russian Poland, which the newspaper defined as the creation of “an embryo of an autonomous Slavic kingdom”, but the newspaper stated that this was not likely to happen<sup>328</sup>. The newspaper used the term Slavic kingdom because the application of the trialist policy would increase, when adding Poles, the percentage of Slavic, non-Germanic non-Magyar inhabitants and politicians in the Habsburg

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<sup>324</sup> Granzów de la Cerda, Casimiro, *Polonia: su gloria en el pasado, su martirio y su resurrección*, Editorial y Prensa, San Sebastián 1919, p.211-212. Original quoted text in Spanish: “En Galitzia, en las clases elevadas, en donde las gentes se hallaban ya habituadas al régimen austriaco, que desde el año 1860, era bastante benévolo para los polacos, la orientación al principio de la guerra era francamente anti-rusa” .

<sup>325</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 212.

<sup>326</sup> A.Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p.149. Original quoted text in Polish: „1.lojalisci, tj. konserwatyści krakowscy i sprzymierzeni z nimi demokraci; 2. Zwolennicy ideologii irredentystycznej (niepodległościowej),3. Narodowcy oraz Podolacy ze wschodniej Galicji, 4. Ludowcy z PSL Piast”.

<sup>327</sup> *Ibidem*, p.150. Original quoted text: „Mieli nadzieje, ze gdy Austriacy odbiorą Rosji Królestwo Polskie z Warszawa, przyłączy je do Galicji, które razem będą stanowić trzeci człon państwa Hamburgów”.

<sup>328</sup> “Los austroalemanes y los polacos, La guerra, Resumen diario de operaciones”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 18.09.1917, p. 1.

Empire. It is logical that the newspaper wrote that this political conception would not become a reality, since the chances for this conception to be applied diminished since November 5, 1916, because of the new political entity that Germany was creating in occupied Russian Poland. It is a fact that Germans did not consider the trialist option whatsoever.

In regard to the Podolyans' political movement, Chwalba explains that its members: "officially announced loyalism towards the Habsburgs, but were concerned about the pro-Ukrainian gestures from Austro-Hungarian politicians, and Podolyans' attitude towards Russia was not so unambiguously negative like that of Cracow conservatives"<sup>329</sup>. We can regard the first and third group listed by Chwalba as activists. Irredentists did not believe in obtaining independence using as a base one of the Powers in the war, so these formed a separate group, ideologically far from activism. In addition, it is difficult to refer to PSL populists as members of the activist movement because, as the same author claims, they were close to passivist *Endecja*<sup>330</sup>. Here, it is a must to highlight that among the examined Spanish press sources of the Great War period there are no references to Polish populists (PSL Piast) politicians, neither to their leader Wincenty Witos himself.

Although the activist views about Poland's political future dominated, particularly in the Galician Polish political spectrum, as the war evolved, especially after the German-Austrian occupation of the whole Russian Poland and after the November 5 Proclamation, activism gained followers among Polish politicians in the Kingdom (Russian Poland). As Chwalba explains, during the German occupation of Russian Poland:

"there were many Polish politicians from the Kingdom who decided for Vienna, [meaning Austria-Hungary], as their base and support for a new Polish state, counting on the incorporation of the Kingdom to Galicia and the creation of Austria-Hungary-Poland. They were supporting themselves on the NKN, whose area of activity in reality initially was limited to the lands of Galicia and Cieszyn Silesia. However, their leaders with [Władysław Leopold] Jaworski and [Władysław] Sikorski in front believed that since trialism had chances to become reality, the activity of NKN had to be moved to the Kingdom"<sup>331</sup>.

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<sup>329</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p.150. „Oficjalnie Podolacy głosili lojalizm wobec Habsburgów, ale niepokoiły ich proukraińskie gesty ze strony c.k. polityków, a ich stosunek do Rosji nie był tak jednoznacznie negatywny jak konserwatystów krakowskich”.

<sup>330</sup> *Ibidem*, *op. cit.*, p. 191-192.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 267-268. “Nie brakowało polskich polityków z Królestwa, którzy postawili na Wiedeń, licząc na przyłączenie Królestwa do Galicji i powstanie Austro-Węgier-Polski. Mieli oparcie w KNN, którego co prawda

However, Chwalba also explains that trialists, unlike in Galicia, did not achieve success in the Kingdom<sup>332</sup>.

Activism was certainly one of the causes of the November 5 Proclamation's creation of a Polish Kingdom in the Austrian-occupied and German-occupied lands of Russian Poland. This view about the causes of the German-Austrian project for Poland was also held by Spanish newspaper 'La Época', which interpreted that the November 5 Proclamation was the result of "[German] propaganda in the whole Vistula region, later a Polish conference in Cracow and finally another one in Lausanne"<sup>333</sup>. By German propaganda the newspaper referred to the Anti-Russian information work of German occupiers in Russian Poland. It is difficult to determine to which Lausanne conference the newspapers editors referred. The Polish conference in Cracow that the newspaper mentioned was the creation of the Supreme National Committee (Naczelny Komitet Narodowy) in August 1914. Pajewski explains that Juliusz Leo, President of the Polish Circle, the group of Polish Austrian Parliament members in Vienna, after returning to Cracow from the Austrian capital on August 13, started meeting with all the Polish political formations in Galicia and, as a result, the Naczelny Komitet Narodowy (Supreme National Committee) was created on August 16 with the role of being "the highest authority in the field of military, fiscal and political organization of the Polish armed forces". The new political organization, as Pajewski also explains, included all the different Polish political currents in Galicia, from Eastern Galician conservatives to Cracow conservatives, through socialists and populists<sup>334</sup>. The Cracow conference was also mentioned by Spain's chargé d'affaires in Petrograd Justo Garrido Cisneros in his November 9, 1916 report to Spain's state minister, in which he also referred to the change from passivism to activism, without mentioning these concepts, of Polish political leaders in Russia. As a matter of fact, Garrido reported that Polish politicians in Russia had informed Russian authorities that they had not sent any representative to the Polish conference in Cracow<sup>335</sup>. However, Spain's chargé d'affaires in Petrograd also referred to Polish political leaders in Russia having approached the Polish-Austrian solution:

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obszar działania był pierwotnie ograniczony do ziem Galicji i Śląska Cieszyńskiego, jednak lego liderzy z Jaworskim i Sikorskim na czele uznali, że skoro trializm ma szanse realizacji, to należy przenieść działalność NKN do Królestwa”.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>333</sup> "La independencia de la Polonia rusa", 'La Época', 7.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>334</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 78.

<sup>335</sup> AHN, H2993, 9.11.1916. Spain's chargé d'affaires in Petrograd Garrido Cisneros to Spain's state minister Amalio Gimeno.

“Fate is adverse to the Russians, who have to evacuate Galicia and most of the Polish territory, distrust spreads and the Russian Government learns that the Polish Councils of Cracow, Vienna [by the Polish Council Vienna Council he most likely referred to the Polish circle in the Austrian Parliament] and Warsaw are in relationship with the Austrian Government, working so that the promise made to Poland by Russia, is fulfilled by Austria, that is, that the Kingdom of Poland is reconstituted, with autonomy, but under the sceptre of the Habsburgs”<sup>336</sup>.

Garrido wrote to Spain’s state minister that Russia’s interior minister asked the regional governors and police chiefs for reports on the political activities of Poles in Russia and, as a reaction, the latter “through their Moscow and Petrograd committees, advocated their adherence to Russia, stating that they had refrained from being represented at the Cracow conference and if they sent a delegate to Lausanne it was to counter Austrian propaganda”. Garrido also reported that when the Duma reopened, Polish deputies asked the Russian government to inform about its plans regarding Poland, but the government representatives avoided the topic<sup>337</sup>.

In relation to the Cracow conservatives group members, Chwalba explains that in Galicia “the pillar of the loyalist political side were the Cracow conservatives, led by Władysław Jaworski, Leon Biliński and Michał Bobrzyński, supported by the democrats, led by Juliusz Leo, mayor of Cracow and president of the Polish Circle in the Vienna State Council”<sup>338</sup>. A few mentions of activist politicians belonging to the Cracow conservatives group are precisely found in the examined Spanish press sources.

For instance, on November 7, 1916 neutrally-oriented newspaper ‘La Época’ claimed that the German-Austrian negotiations regarding the future of the Polish occupied lands had started in October 1915 and, as part of these, former Austro-Hungarian Minister of Treasury, [Leon] Biliński, [a Pole] was in charge of “making the union of the districts”, a plan which according to ‘La Época’ failed. In relation to this, a similar idea is presented by Polish historian

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<sup>336</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “la suerte es adversa a los rusos, los cuales tienen que desalojar la Galicia y la mayor parte del territorio polonés, cunde la desconfianza y el Gobierno ruso se entera de que las Juntas polacas de Cracovia, Viena y Varsovia están en relación con el Gobierno austriaco, trabajando para que la promesa hecha a Polonia por Rusia, sea cumplida por Austria, es decir, que se reconstituyera el Reino de Polonia, con autonomía, pero bajo el cetro de los Habsburgo”.

<sup>337</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>338</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 150. Original quoted text: „Filarem obozu lojalistycznego byli krakowscy konserwatyści, którym przewodzili tacy politycy, jak Władysław Leopold Jaworski, Leon Biliński, Michał Bobrzyński, wspierani przez demokratów z Juliuszem Leo, prezydentem Krakowa i prezesem koła polskiego w wiedeńskiej Radzie Państwa na czele”.

Pajewski, referring to Biliński, when he writes that in Galicia: “conservatives and democrats advocated the Austro-Polish solution without restrictions. From the first moments a lively work on this direction was developed by common Austro-Hungarian Finance Minister Leon Biliński”<sup>339</sup>. The question here resides in how to interpret ‘La Époque’'s comments, taking into account its wording: whether, in the newspaper’s editors view, this political solution for Poland was to be a union under the German Empire, what would have been a wrong interpretation, or if they understood it was a union to have these lands as part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. If ‘La Époque’ insinuated that the union would be under the control of the German Empire then it must have been probably a misunderstanding by ‘La Époque’ or by the source used by its editors. ‘La Époque’, for the sake of clarity, should have reported explicitly it referred to an Austrian-ruled union of Galicia with occupied Russian former Congress Poland but the text did not phrase this clearly enough. However, ‘La Époque’'s editors were right when they claimed that the plan to join occupied Russian Poland and Austrian Poland in a single political territorial entity was not executed. Regarding the reasons for this failure of the Galicia-Kingdom merging plan, Chwalba explains that Hungarian Prime Minister István Tisza opposed trialism, as other Hungarian politicians did, and specifically:

“when in August 1914 Leon Biliński prepared an appeal to the Poles in the Polish Kingdom having in mind letting it be spread in name of the emperor, and on it he announced the merging of the Kingdom and Galicia and the creation of a government and a parliament in Warsaw, this encountered the opposition of Tisza and the project ended up in the trash bin”<sup>340</sup>.

In his memories, worth consulting in regard to this question, Biliński explains that in spring 1916 Gyula Andrassy Jr. informed him that “in the autumn of 1915 a note from the German government came to Vienna with the proposition of the takeover by the [Austro-Hungarian] monarchy of the whole Russian Poland under certain conditions”<sup>341</sup>, and then Andrassy mentioned this note to István Burian and advised the latter to take the German offer and to write to the Germans that he would list the conditions for such a political operation in a

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<sup>339</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p.73. Original quoted text: „Konserwatyści i demokraci opowiadali się bez zastrzeżeń za rozwiązaniem austro-polskim. Od pierwszej chwili żywa działalność w tym kierunku rozwinął wspólny austro-węgierski minister finansów Leon Biliński”.

<sup>340</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 178. Original quoted text: „Kiedy w sierpniu 1914 Biliński opracował odezwę do Polaków w Królestwie Polskim z myślą o jej upowszechnieniu w imieniu cesarza, a w niej zapowiedział połączenie Królestwa i Galicji oraz powołanie rządu i sejmu w Warszawie, natrafił na zdecydowany sprzeciw Tiszy i projekt powędrował do kosza”.

<sup>341</sup> L. Biliński, *Wspomnienia i dokumenty. T. 2, 1915-1922*, Warszawa 1924, p. 88.



separate letter, but Burian eventually did not follow Andrassy's advice and rejected the German offer. According to Biliński, what the Germans exactly proposed to Austria, was "the incorporation of Kongresówka [Russian Poland, the Kingdom] to Galicia and to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in the form of an equivalent Polish Kingdom"<sup>342</sup>. The fact that such a note was received was even confirmed by Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph to Biliński in their meeting on September 30, 1916, a few weeks before the emperor's death<sup>343</sup>. After Burian's rejection of the German offer, in Biliński's opinion, the idea of the Polish-Austrian solution fell apart<sup>344</sup>.

A second mention of Leon Biliński appeared on the aforementioned 'La Époque's' article. In this second mention of the Polish activist politician, the newspaper's editors argued that Russian Poles had learned a lot from the oppression suffered in Russian hands and would not be easily deceived by the German bait of the November 5 Proclamation, and this fact was pointed out in "the proposal that Prince Czartoryski and 39 professors from Cracow University raised to the Austrian ex-minister Biliński the previous year"<sup>345</sup>. No written content of the proposal has been found but, according to 'La Époque's' words, we can interpret that Czartoryski and the professors warned Biliński about the dangers of accepting a German-controlled Polish Kingdom, even if it joined Galicia. Chwalba defines Prince Witold Czartoryski as one of the Podolyans and, as this author explains, Podolyans were pro-Austrian but were less anti-Russians than other Polish political groups in Austria-Hungary<sup>346</sup>.

When identifying and analysing the reflections on and echoes of the Polish activist movement in the Spanish press, it is also important to mention that at least two references to the NKN (Supreme National Committee), one of them focusing on one of the entity's leaders, Jaworski, are found in the analysed press sources. Firstly, on January 9, 1915 allegedly neutrally-oriented newspaper 'La Époque' published fragments of an alleged NKN's pro-Austrian way manifesto, although the newspaper mistakenly used the wording "Polish National Committee" to refer to the manifesto's authorship. In the published fragments of the manifesto in the Spanish newspaper we read:

"Poles cannot remain indifferent being their fate at stake. They have refused a policy of passivity that some politicians, fans of showing loyalty to the Russian

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<sup>342</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 87.

<sup>343</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 91.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>345</sup> "La independencia de la Polonia rusa", 'La Époque', 7.11.1916, p. 1.

<sup>346</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

government and little concerned about the honour of the Polish nation. It would be discreditable of a great nation to wait patiently to see who will turn out the winner of the current war, and declare in favour of it. Poles, have decided, because of this, to call to their alive forces, take part in the conflict in the sense required by their interests and to open, trying this way its vitality, the path of its national aspirations. To which side should they lean? ¿To whom should they lend their participation: to the Triple Alliance or the Triple Entente? Anyone who knows the history of Poles in Austria and Russia will not doubt. It would be useless to insist in the privileged situation that Poles have in Austria. Known is the political value that they represent in that country, and the complete freedom that has been left to their national evolution. But this, even being already a lot in comparison with the fate reserved to Poles in Russia, would not constitute more than a debt of gratitude with Austria, and would not be enough to determine a policy which is not only founded in past conquests, but also, and above all, in the probability of acquisitions in the future. From this point of view the obvious interest of Poles demands from them the union with Austria-Hungary. This, because of its dualist constitution and its multinational character, offers undoubtedly more warranties than Russia to the safeguard of the national and political individuality of the Poles. The Austro-Hungarian constitution is flexible enough to be able to extend itself to a new nation, with equality of rights to the two nations already existing"<sup>347</sup>.

I have not been able to confirm the exact date and the exact circumstances in which the manifesto was written, but everything indicates to NKN (Supreme National Committee) being responsible for its authorship. In these fragments of the manifesto, highlighting Russian

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<sup>347</sup> “Los polacos y la guerra. Un manifiesto”, ‘La Época’, 9.01.1915, p. 2. Original quoted text: “Los polacos no pueden permanecer indiferentes estando su suerte en juego. Han rechazado una política de pasividad, que les habían aconsejado algunos políticos, harto aficionados a demostrar lealtad al gobierno ruso, y poco celosos del honor de la nación polaca. Sería indigno de un gran pueblo esperar pacientemente a ver quién saldrá vencedor de la guerra actual, y declararse entonces por él. Los polacos han decidido, por ello, llamar a sus fuerzas vivas, tomar parte en la contienda, en el sentido demandado por sus intereses, y abrir, probando su vitalidad, el camino de sus aspiraciones nacionales.

¿A qué lado deben inclinarse? ¿A quién deben presentar su concurso: a la Triple Alianza o a la Triple Entente? Cualquiera que conozca la historia de los polacos en Austria y en Rusia, no podrá dudar. Sería inútil insistir en la situación privilegiada que tienen los polacos en Austria. Conocido es el papel político que representan en ese país, y la completa libertad que se ha dejado a su evolución nacional. Por esto, aun siendo ya mucho en comparación con la suerte reservada a los polacos en Rusia, no constituiría más que una deuda de gratitud con Austria, y no bastaría quizás para determinar una política que no se funda solamente en las conquistas del pasado, sino también, y sobre todo, en la probabilidad de adquisiciones en el porvenir. Desde este punto de vista, el interés evidente de los polacos les exige la unión con Austria-Hungría. Esta, por su constitución dualista y su carácter plurinacional, ofrece indudablemente más garantías que Rusia para salvaguardarla de la individualidad nacional y política de los polacos. La constitución austro-húngara es suficientemente elástica para poder extenderse a una Nueva Nación, con igualdad de derechos a las dos Naciones ya existentes”.

oppression and Austrian positive attitude towards Poles, we see explicit criticism of passivism and advocacy of the principles not also of activism but also of trialism. These were clearly echoed by the non-pro-allied non-Germanophile Spanish newspaper, which did not make any comment on the text of the manifesto. Therefore, we can interpret that 'La Época' did not treat this manifesto as a first order topic in international affairs on that day's edition of the newspaper.

The Spanish press also mentioned leading activist and NKN leader, lawyer Władysław Leopold Jaworski. In fact, on April 2, 1915 pro-allied newspaper 'El Heraldo de Madrid' referred to an article published on Hungarian newspaper 'Az Est' by "Dr. Jaworski", who, according to 'El Heraldo de Madrid', was "the president of the National Polish Committee". The Spanish newspaper published the following fragment of Jaworski's article:

"Since the dissolution of the kingdom of Poland Poles have awaited the war between the Powers that partitioned her territory. From this point of view, the current war could be almost called the fulfilment of the Polish program. The main goal of this Committee is the formation of the Polish legions in Galicia, which fight against Russia to achieve the freedom of their nation in a tight union with the Austrian monarchy. The great majority of Poles feel this sympathy towards Austria. Recently it has been known that a great number of eminent Poles from Warsaw have been detained by the Russian authorities because of their political declarations, favourable to Austria. Another eloquent fact is the circumstance that, despite all the efforts by the Russian government, it has not been possible to form any Polish legion to fight with the Muscovite troops. The spirit of the Polish nation refused the very idea of such a venture. Poles await with trust that the current war will bring them the liberation from the Russian yokes and, to that end, they adopt all their policies from international politics point of view, the need of Poland's existence cannot offer any doubt for any politician of the Western civilization. It is natural that Germany and Austria have the most immediate interest in the existence of Poland because this country would form a formidable bulwark against Russia. It seems that many high German and Austrian personalities have expressed themselves perfectly recognizing the justice of the national demands of the Poles, whose historical interests are now intimately tied to those of Austria-Hungary in the first place"<sup>348</sup>.

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<sup>348</sup> "De la prensa extranjera. Los polacos en la guerra mundial", 'El Heraldo de Madrid', 2.04.1915, p. 2. Original quoted text: "Desde la disolución del reino de Polonia los polacos han esperado la guerra entre las potencias que se repartieron su territorio. Desde este punto de vista, la guerra actual se podría casi llamar el cumplimiento del

Jaworski was the president of the Western branch of the activist Supreme National Committee, NKN, and not of the passivist Polish National Committee. Both in the case of this article on 'El Heraldo de Madrid' and of the manifesto published by 'La Época', the same mistake was made, which could have been caused either by the newspaper's mistranslation of the activist political institution's name or by wrong naming of the organization in the original source the newspaper used. In the reference to Jaworski, the source that 'El Heraldo de Madrid' probably used was a press note or an article quoting the mentioned Hungarian newspaper. It is worth adding that at the time when this article from the Hungarian newspaper was published in the Spanish press, in April 1915, Jaworski was leading the Western NKN, in a moment when the organization had a great influence among Poles in Galicia. In relation to this fact, it is worth adding, in regard to the activist organization's situation in the early phase of the war, that as Chwalba explains, already in November 1914:

“NKN [(Supreme National Committee)] counted with 40 people, later 50. The conservatives dominated, although among them were missing Leon Biliński, who then was Austro-Hungarian finance minister, Michal Bobrzyński, who waited for a minister position and also the sceptical ones, Agenor Maria Gołuchowski, Stanisław Koźmian. The committee was formed by two sections: Western with Jaworski and Eastern with Cieński [...] the first president was Leo, what guaranteed a personal union between NKN and the Polish Circle [in Vienna]. After the latter's demission, on November 22, the ambitious Jaworski, by then vice-president became the new president[...] a few months later, Biliński, president of the Polish circle, took the president's armchair.[...] NKN was divided in departments, among which the military one, directed by Wladyslaw Sikorski, was the most important one.[...] NKN was created above all with

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programa polaco. El fin principal de este Comité es la formación de las Legaciones polacas en Galitzia, las cuales luchan contra Rusia para lograr la libertad de su nación, en estrecha unión con la Monarquía austriaca. La gran mayoría de los polacos sienten estas simpatías hacia Austria. Recientemente se ha sabido que gran número de eminentes polacos de Varsovia han sido detenidos por las autoridades rusas por sus manifestaciones políticas favorables a Austria. Otro hecho elocuente es la circunstancia de que, a pesar de todos los esfuerzos del Gobierno ruso, no ha sido posible formar ninguna legión polaca para combatir con las tropas moscovitas. El espíritu de la nación polaca rechazó la sola idea de semejante empresa. Los polacos esperan con confianza que la guerra actual les traerá la liberación del yugo ruso, y a este fin adaptan toda su política. Desde el punto de vista de la política internacional, da necesidad de la existencia de Polonia no puede ofrecer duda para ningún político de la civilización occidental. Es natural que Alemania y Austria tienen el interés más inmediato en la existencia de Polonia, porque este reino formaría un formidable baluarte contra Rusia. Parece que muchos altos personajes alemanes y austriacos se han expresado en el sentido de que reconocen perfectamente la justicia de las exigencias nacionales históricas de los polacos, cuyos intereses están ahora íntimamente ligados a los de Austria-Hungría en primer término”.

the goal of creating and supervising the Polish legions, which appeared in the place of the riflemen divisions<sup>349</sup>”.

Jaworski is, in fact, mentioned many times by Andrzej Chwalba, what confirms the former's importance in the activist field. According to another consulted Polish author, Pajewski, Jaworski was “one of the main spokesmen of the Austro-Polish solution” and on April 22, 1917, as Pajewski details, he wrote that Poles were in a situation that forced them to join the Kingdom but under German control, but, in Jarowski's view, this was not a good option for Poles, because this new Polish Kingdom would not last if the Allies defeated Germany in the war. Jaworski also stated that Germany could still betray the Polish cause and avoid fulfilling the promises made to the Poles. Furthermore, Pajewski adds that, a few months after these words, Jaworski admitted that a German defeat in the war was the best option for Poles<sup>350</sup>.

Another famous activist that featured in the Spanish press was Adam Ronikier, who was in the group of those cooperating with the German authorities in the Kingdom. Ronikier was interviewed in Warsaw by ‘ABC’'s correspondent Javier Bueno (Antonio Azpeitua) around November 5, 1916. Bueno defined Ronikier as “one of the most influential directors” of the Polish nation and described him as “high culture gentleman”. Moreover, Bueno claimed that Ronikier would play “an important role” in the future political development of Poland. In the interview, Ronikier highlighted the German concessions to Poles by means of the Polish Kingdom creation and positively described the benefits for Poland of supporting its own future on Germany<sup>351</sup>. In his conversation with the Spanish correspondent, Ronikier also highlighted the work done by the aid committee he presided, and also Poles' organizing skills in comparison with Russians’:

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<sup>349</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 169-170. Original quoted text: “NKN liczył 40 osób, później 50. Dominowali konserwatyści, aczkolwiek spośród nich zabrakło Leona Bilińskiego, który był wówczas c.k. ministrem skarbu, Michała Bobrzyńskiego, który czekał na stanowisko ministerialne, a także sceptyków, Agenora Marii Goluchowskiego i Stanisława Koźmiana. Komitet składał się z dwóch sekcji: Zachodniej z Jaworskim i Wschodniej z Cieńskim[...] Pierwszym prezesem został Leo, co gwarantowało unię personalną między NKN a Kołem Polskim. Po jego ustąpieniu, 22 listopada, nowym prezesem został ambitny Jaworski, dotychczasowy wiceprezes[...]w kilka miesięcy później zasiadł w nim Biliński, prezes Koła Polskiego [...]. NKN był podzielony na departamenty, z których najważniejszym stał się Departament Wojskowy kierowany przez Władysława Sikorskiego [...] NKN został powołany nade wszystko w celu stworzenia i nadzorowania Legionów Polskich, które powstały w miejsce oddziałów strzeleckich”.

<sup>350</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

<sup>351</sup> “La resurrección de un reino. Lo que piensan los directores del pueblo polaco”, ‘ABC’, 1.12.1916, p. 3-4.

“in order for you to believe in the organizing spirit of Poles, it is needed that you know the enormous difference existing between us and the Russians. The world makes a mistake when equals us to our dominators and I remember how much I was bothered when in the hotels of Niza and Montecarlo I was told when I registered as a Pole, “well, yes, Russian” ”<sup>352</sup>.

More details about Bueno’s Ronikier interview are found in the section about the November 5, 1916 Proclamation.

Comments in the Spanish press about an Austrian solution, even after the November 5 Proclamation, or about a German solution, for Poland’s political future, appeared throughout the entire war period but, by the end of the war, these started focusing on a change in most Poles’ attitude, particularly in those Poles who were previously in favour of Austria or Germany, as the base for Poland’s independence. Many references are also found in the examined sources to the change of attitude of Polish politicians in Austria, especially those in the Austrian Parliament, towards the Austrian government and the Crown, withdrawing their support from the Austrian institutions and becoming “separatists” and “revolutionaries”. For instance, on June 24, 1917 ‘La Correspondencia de España’, witnessing a change from activism to irredentism among Austrian Poles, referred to political turbulences in Austria and wrote that Poles, Czechs and other Slavs joined forces against the Austrian authorities, and also that “their leaders pronounced violent speeches” in the Austrian Reichstag. ‘La Correspondencia de España’ also quoted Jan Stapiński saying “we condemn and we refuse the ridiculous Kingdom of Poland, which Germany and Austria intend to make up. We want a true independence and we will have it”. The Spanish pro-Entente newspaper added that the situation of Czechs and other Slavs creating political turbulences in the Austrian parliament was not new, but Poles as "oppositionists" was something completely new in Austrian politics. The pro-allied Spanish newspaper’s editors, looking into the past also explained:

"Poles in Austria always sustained the Vienna government. And this can be explained. They compared their situation with that of Poles in Prussia and Russia and they were thankful. As a [political] calculation, the Austrian governments supported themselves on the Galicians to contain Croatians, Slavonians and Bohemians. But the

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<sup>352</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 3-4. Original quoted text: “Para que usted crea en el espíritu organizador del polaco es preciso que conozca la diferencia enorme que existe entre nosotros y los rusos. El mundo comete un error cuando nos equipara a nuestros dominadores, y yo recuerdo lo que me molestaba que en los hoteles de Niza o de Montecarlo me dijeran cuando me inscribía como polaco: “Bueno, sí, ruso...””.

Russian revolution has changed the basis of the problem. The Petrograd government proclaimed the absolute independence of Poland. Russian Poles will be free, but neither Germany or Austria want that also Poles born in the Poznań region and Galicia will be free. The Polish state that was conceived in Vienna and Berlin cannot satisfy anyone. It is a farse. It is because of this that Galicians have decided to become revolutionists"<sup>353</sup>.

A few months later, on January 23, 1918, the same newspaper claimed that “Poles, always so faithful to the Habsburgs in Austria, have changed to the side of the opposition, and are today more revolutionary and separatist than the Bohemians”<sup>354</sup>. As seen, the change of attitude of Polish politicians in Vienna was so radical that surprised Spanish journalists and commentators, but it must be highlighted that by January 23, 1918 this change had not reached its culmination point yet. A true turning point in activism would occur as a consequence of the Brest-Litovsk treaties. The November 5, 1916 plans for Poland presented by Germany had already, at least partially, ended Polish nationalists’ hopes for the creation of Austria-Hungary-Poland. However, the Brest-Litovsk Treaties discouraged the Polish activist movement as a whole, Kisielewski argues<sup>355</sup>. A truly favourable solution for Poland from the Central Powers was no longer an option. In the section about the two Brest-Litovsk treaties (below in this first chapter), Polish reactions, including those of Austrian Poles who until that moment were activists, in the view of Spain’s press and diplomacy, are analysed.

## Passivism

As passivists we must identify those Poles who, just before and during the Great War, saw the political future of Poland tied to Russia, saw Germany as Poland’s main enemy and

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<sup>353</sup> “Austria”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 24.06.1917, p. 1. Original quoted text: “Los polacos de Austria sostuvieron siempre al gobierno de Viena. Y se explica. Comparaban su situación con la de los polacos de Prusia y de Rusia y se sentían agradecidos. Por cálculo, los Gobiernos austríacos se apoyaban en los galitzianos para contener a los croatas, eslavones y bohemios. Más la revolución rusa ha cambiado los fundamentos del problema. El gobierno de Petrogrado proclamó la independencia absoluta de Polonia. Los polacos rusos serán libres. Pero ni Alemania ni Austria quieren que lo sean también los polacos nacidos en Posnania y en Galitzia. El estado polaco que imaginaron en Viena y Berlín no puede satisfacer a nadie. Es una farsa. De ahí que los galitzianos hayan resultado hacerse revolucionarios”.

<sup>354</sup> “Es muy grave”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 23.01.1918, p. 1.

<sup>355</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i niepodległość Polski 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

believed that Russia would win the war. The passivists supported their views and actions on the Great Duke's Proclamation to the Poles at the beginning of the war. During the global conflict, their main political group, although not the only one, was the National Democrats (Endecja) and Liga Narodowa was their main political organization before the war. Pajewski claims, regarding the passivist political conception, that Dmowski and Liga Narodowa in Russian and in German Poland believed that in a situation of war between Russia and Austria, an anti-Russian attitude was not a Polish nationalist attitude<sup>356</sup>.

Polish passivists had a significant visibility, although lower than activists, on the examined Spanish press sources throughout the whole war period. The passivists mentioned in the examined Spanish press sources are Dmowski, Korfanty, Balicki, Count Wielopolski, Marian Lutoslavski (and his brother Józef), Lubomirski (although he is mostly mentioned after becoming one of the regents, when he was already rather an activist) and Mauricy Zamoyski, (although rather by the end of the war, when he was a member of the Paris-based Polish National Committee). The most often mentioned passivism advocate in the Spanish press sources of the Great War period, as one would expect, was Roman Dmowski. In fact, two interviews with the passivist National Democrats' leader were featured in the Spanish press during the Great War period. One of them, conducted by Sofía Casanova, was published on 'ABC' during the first phase of the war, on 14 July 1915, and the second one was published towards the latest stages of the war on 24 July, 1918, on 'El Sol', conducted by the newspaper's correspondent in Paris Corpus Barga. These interviews will be analysed below in this section.

Passivism-advocating KNP (Polish National Committee) was created in November 1914 and gathered national democrats, realists and independents, but as Pajewski argued, at that point the KNP was not a very important political player in the Kingdom, and neither was it in the Polish lands overall, because, in reality, it only represented National Democracy. He adds that at the beginning of the war the main role of this organization was to create a Polish legion to fight along the Russians<sup>357</sup>. It is significant that no manifestos or letters from this first KNP (the second one created in 1917 had more prominence than the first one in the Spanish press, by the end of the war) appeared in the Spanish press.

According to Janusz Pajewski, in Russian Poland (Kingdom or Congress Poland) at the beginning of the war, Poles were in favour of a Russian victory and a German defeat in the war, and Russian soldiers were even cheered in Polish cities<sup>358</sup>. According to A. Chwalba, when the

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<sup>356</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>357</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 62.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 57-58.



war started, “the Kingdom inhabitants overall greeted friendly and event enthusiastically the Russian regiments marching to the front” and the renowned historian adds that Russian Imperial flags were visible in the Kingdom’s towns, and masses were held in honour of Russian soldiers. This author also claims that, in a way, Poles in Russian Poland (Kingdom) seemed to have forgotten “bloodily muffled uprisings, repressions, exiles, Russification and the pacification of factories” and had changed their attitude towards “the Kozak”<sup>359</sup>.

Sofía Casanova was the Spanish press contributor or correspondent who most often referred to passivists or their ideas in the examined period. For instance, on a text published on ‘ABC’, on April 29, 1915, Casanova quoted “passivist” Polish deputy Jaroński’s declaration at the Duma at the beginning of the war, with the following fragment: “Poland is placing itself on Russia’s side to defend the common enemy hoping that the horrors of fratricide war will be the last sacrifice in the holocaust of Poland’s integration”<sup>360</sup>. In relation to this declaration, Chwalba explains that in the Russian Duma gathering of August 8, 1914, Jaroński gave a speech as the representative of the Polish Circle and, according to Chwalba, he “sent greetings to the brother Slavic Russian nation from the Polish nation” in an intervention full of “Antigermanism, Russian patriotism and Panslavism”. This speech, as Chwalba explains, was very positively perceived by Dmowski and by Russian chauvinist deputy Vladimir Puryszkiewicz. Chwalba also reproduces a fragment of Jaroński’s speech:

“separated by cordons, we Poles, in terms of feelings and kindness towards the Slavs, should create unity. Not only the righteousness of the cause for which Russia stands up advises us to do so, but also in the political mind ... God let the Slavs, led by Russia, to repel the Teutons just as Poland and Lithuania repelled them at Grunwald five hundred years ago. Let our shed blood and the horrors of fratricidal war lead to the unity of the Polish nation torn by three”<sup>361</sup>.

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<sup>359</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1818*, *op. cit.*, p. 186. „mieszkańcy Królestwa, z reguły, przyjaźnie, a nawet entuzjastycznie witali kolejne pulki rosyjskie” maszerujące na front”; „[...] krwawo stłumionych powstaniach, zsyłkach, represjach, rusefikacji, pacyfikacji fabryk”.

<sup>360</sup> “Domingo de resurrección”, ‘ABC’, 29.04.1915, p. 4.

<sup>361</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 192. Original quoted text: „przesłał pozdrowienia bratniemu słowiańskiemu narodowi rosyjskiemu od narodu polskiego”. ;”rozdzieleni kordonami, my Polacy, pod względem uczuć i życzliwości ku Słowianom, powinniśmy tworzyć jedność. Radzi nam tak postąpić nie tylko słuszność sprawy, za którą ujęła się Rosja, ale i rozum polityczny. Daj boże, aby Słowianie, pod przewodnictwem Rosji, tak odparli Teutonów, jak przed pięciuset laty odparła Polska i Litwa pod Grunwaldem. Niechaj przelana krew nasza i okropności bratobójczej dla nas wojny doprowadza do polaczenia rozdany na troje naród polski”.

Casanova's quoted sentence corresponds to the last sentence of the fragment quoted by Chwalba but the wording and way to express the idea is different in Casanova's quoted text than in Chwalba's quoted text. The word "holocaust" used by Casanova should be interpreted as sacrifice because of love, or in favour of [the reunion of Poland]. It is significative that Casanova regarded the Great Duke's appeal to the Poles on August 14, 1914 as a response to Jaroński's speech, which she described as "historical"<sup>362</sup>.

In relation to the passivist stand of many leading Polish politicians, it is worth highlighting that Casanova claimed that Polish nationalists expected Russia to unite the Polish lands under her patronage as it was promised by the Great Duke, but according to the Spanish writer, the Kaiser wanted this unity to happen in the opposite way, by means of forced Germanization. In relation to this, she added: "Sad luck of this nation. Among enemies it has to associate to one of them and places its future on sceptres of tyrants"<sup>363</sup>. Thus, for Casanova there was no other alternative for Poland than to seek for its political freedom by allying to one of the partitioning powers, which, in her view, had to be Russia. At this point, it is also worth commenting that during the Great War, Germany never really considered uniting the three parts of Poland as a serious option, but rather considered uniting the Kingdom with Galicia under German control, partitioning the occupied Kingdom between her and Austria, or annexing parts of the Kingdom with strategic or economic value to Germany. It is interesting to add that, according to Polish-Spanish writer, columnist, businessman and diplomat Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda, as we read in his 1919 book, German authorities made positive movements towards those Poles that were keen on Poland being together with Russia, referring to passivists, arguing that these would be more open to cooperate with German authorities of the German-occupied Kingdom<sup>364</sup>.

As we can see in the large number of texts which she dedicated to Polish passivism-advocating leaders, at the beginning of the war Casanova's views on the Polish question were clearly closer to Dmowski's passivism than to those of Cracovian conservatives, or to Piłsudski's activism Casanova referred to the National Democrats (Endecja) as "nationalists". For instance, she used the adjectives "brave" and "optimistic" to define the National Democrats<sup>365</sup>. However, at the same time, Casanova was very critical of Russia's treatment of Poles, a stand that would not completely fit in the Polish passivism environment of the time.

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<sup>362</sup> "Domingo de resurrección", 'ABC', 29.04.1915, p. 4.

<sup>363</sup> "En Varsovia, la ciudad aterrada", 'ABC', 14.07.1915, p. 4.

<sup>364</sup> C. Granzów de la Cerda, *Polonia: su gloria en el pasado, su martirio y su resurrección*, op. cit., p. 230.

<sup>365</sup> "ABC en Varsovia, la ciudad aterrada", 'ABC', 14.07.1915, p. 4.

For instance, on her December 5, 1915 (in reality written in October) article “ABC en Rusia, problema internacional II”, Sofía Casanova, coherently argued that an allied victory would allow the Polish question to move towards Poland’s political freedom, unlike a victory of the Central Powers, which would subdue the Poles. In the same article, Casanova defined Dmowski as “the prestigious leader of the nationalists” and claimed that Dmowski “defended Poland’s wishes”. Casanova quoted Dmowski by using the weekly ‘Sprawa Polska’, published in Petrograd, as a source. The quoted text was the following:

“When the fight started, Poland asked itself this question: what is the war going to give us? What is it that it must give us? Most of us were prepared for great disasters and to make sacrifices, but we understood that with them we will achieve the advantage of tomorrow. Our future as a nation, the favourable conditions for our national political development depend on how this war resolves the multiple problems it generates. Germany’s attitudes towards us do not leave any doubt”<sup>366</sup>.

In addition, Casanova argued that, generally speaking, Poles, the same as herself, preferred a Russian-ruled solution for Poland, which would include the three Partitions and would give Poles a lot of political freedom<sup>367</sup>. It must be pointed out, regarding Casanova’s statement, that, in that case, she was not showing the whole political reality throughout the Polish lands and across Polish points of view to her readers. The question that arises is whether this was due to a lack of knowledge about activists and their influence, or rather because Casanova, on purpose, downplayed the importance of activism in the Polish lands’ societies, particularly in Galicia. Casanova argued that the Russian solution was better than the German one because for Poland, the Russians were a smaller enemy than the Germans, and the former would want to completely dominate the Polish lands in case Poland was not on their side<sup>368</sup>.

However, despite Casanova’s large affinity with the idea of Poland supporting itself on Russia, rather than on the Central Powers, namely Germany, on her article “Polonia, problema internacional”, published on December 2, 1915, but written in October 1915, the Spanish writer argued that she had sympathy for Austria because of the common religion with Spain, the

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<sup>366</sup> “Problema internacional II”, ‘ABC’, 5.12.1915, p.6. Original quoted text: “Al comenzar la lucha hizose esta interrogación Polonia: ¿Qué va a darnos la guerra? ¿Qué es lo que debe darnos? La generalidad de nosotros, preparada estaba a grandes desastres, a inmensos sacrificios; pero entendía que con ellos lograban las ventajas del mañana. Nuestro porvenir como nación, las condiciones favorables a nuestro desenvolvimiento político nacional, dependen de como resuelve esta guerra los múltiples problemas que suscita”.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>368</sup> *Ibidem*.

common past between both countries under the Habsburg royal dynasty, and the fact that Austria gave Galician Poles self-government in the form of autonomy. In addition, Casanova claimed:

“the eight years I lived in Krakow made me appreciate the wideness of life, the culture, the fertile development of arts and sciences in the autonomous Galicia, and in this city of medieval walls, of the Cathedral with Saint Stanislaw’s tomb on top of the Polish Kings pantheon, which in peregrination was visited by oppressed subjects of the Kaiser and the Tsar, being jealous of their Galician brothers”<sup>369</sup>.

One could say that despite the fact that Casanova was closer to passivists, she was aware that among the three parts of partitioned Poland, Polishness had freely developed only in Austria, and she had felt this Polishness while she lived in Cracow. In regard to Austria-Hungary’s plans for Poland, on 14 July 1915, just few weeks before the Central Powers took Warsaw and started their occupation of the city and the whole Kingdom (Russian Poland), Casanova wondered about the Central Powers’ political intentions for Poland, once they would take Russian Poland, and mentioned two options: either Poland becoming a protectorate of Austria-Hungary due to the former’s Catholicism, or Poland becoming a state on its own. She claimed she “did not dare to ask the Polish nationalists [whose optimism she highlighted] about it”<sup>370</sup>. This can be interpreted as a reference to the National Democrats not being too concerned or even too realistic about Poland’s future, taking into account the upcoming arrival of the German armies into the Kingdom<sup>371</sup>.

In her July 14, 1915 article, Casanova also included a transcription of her conversation/interview with Dmowski, the most relevant parts of which, concerning the Polish question, are reproduced below:

SC: How much time will the Germans be in Warsaw? I asked Dmowski, the leader of the nationalists.

RD: Let's let them enter first- he said smiling.

SC: Do you doubt that they will take Warsaw?

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<sup>369</sup> “Polonia, problema internacional”, ‘ABC’, 2.12.1915, p.3. Original quoted text: “Los ocho años que viví en Cracovia hicieronme apreciar la amplitud de vida, la cultura, el desarrollo fecundísimo de las artes y de las ciencias en la autónoma Galitzia, y en esa ciudad de los muros medievales, de la catedral con el sepulcro de San Estanislao sobre el panteón de los Reyes polacos, panteón que, en peregrinación, visitaban los oprimidos súbditos del Kaiser y del Zar, envidiando a sus hermanos los galitzianos”.

<sup>370</sup> “ABC en Varsovia, la ciudad aterrada”, ‘ABC’, 14.07.1915, p. 4.

<sup>371</sup> *Ibidem*.

RD: Today they have 35 out of 65 probabilities of doing it, when they will be in Lublin the probabilities increase, and will be in their favour 80 against 20.

SC: let's suppose that, like they have proved in Galicia, they will not stop on their way and they take Warsaw ¿Would it take Russians long to expel them if they manage to expel them?

RD: Ah! in two months, in one year or three. The time cannot be determined and it is not the most important thing. For us, more than Lemberg's surrender, what matters more, is the change of government in Petrograd. Maklakov's fall shows the triumph at last of the Great Duke Nicholas' policy, consistent with his attitude towards Poles".[...]

SC: In the famous proclamation it is said "the day has arrived in which Poles make true the dream of their ancestors". Is that time already sounding in the clock of justice?

RD: "they play like in the eve"-Dmowski replied with a good humour, direct and added: years of disturbances will follow to these days. We will not reach the fruit. But it will be for another generation. Today Russia fights with Germany, which has had her subdued so much time, in the battlefields and from the presidency of the Ministers Council".

SC: Do you know the Great Duke Nicholas?

RD: Yes, I visited him in his headquarters in the train that serves him and his military staff as lodging place. Very tall, lean, his courtesy has the seriousness of a constant preoccupation: his responsibility as generalissimo of the armies. he doesn't laugh, but he looks faithfully and is noble in his handsomeness and gestures.[...]

SC: Is it true, as your assistant the count P. [Potocki] says that he has a great sympathy for Poles?

RD: For the Polish cause, yes, he has it. For the Poles, I don't know. Being a soldier by vocation, he must appreciate in us the military temperament which has made our history glorious. Like the poet, right now ours can say 'there is no handful of land without a Polish tomb'. One million two hundred thousand fight in the armies of the three parts of Poland, and our 'legionists' have bravely received the blood baptism in Radom"<sup>372</sup>.

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<sup>372</sup> "ABC en Varsovia, la ciudad aterrada", 'ABC', 14.07.1915, p. 4. Original quoted text: "—Cuanto tiempo estarán en Varsovia los alemanes?—interrogué a Dmowski, el leader de los nacionalistas. —Dejémoslos entrar primero—dijo sonriente. —¿Duda usted de que tomen a Varsovia?—Tienen hoy treinta y cinco probabilidades contra sesenta y cinco de hacerlo. Cuando estén en Lublin aumentan aquellas, y apuntarán en su favor ochenta contra veinte. —Demos por supuesto que, cual han demostrado en Galitzia, no se detienen en el camino y toman Varsovia. ¿Tardaría mucho Rusia en echarlos, si es que los echa?—Lo hará seguramente--¿En cuánto tiempo?— ¡Ah!, en dos meses, en un año o tres. El tiempo no puede precisarse, y no es lo más importante. A nosotros, más que la rendición de Lemberg, nos importa el cambio de Gobierno en San Petrogrado. La caída de Maklakov pone de manifiesto el triunfo, ¡por fin!, de la política del gran duque Nicolás, consecuente en su actitud liberal hacia los polacos. [...]—Se dice en la famosa proclama "ha llegado el día de que realicen el sueño de sus

From the interview or conversation with Sofía Casanova, it can be interpreted that Dmowski did not believe that Poland's political freedom or independence would occur soon, in his generation, despite the promises made by the Great Duke to the Poles. However, it can be interpreted that Dmowski believed in the Great Duke's good intentions towards Poles and also believed that Russia would put into practice that policy towards Poland, thanks to Maklakov no longer being the Homeland Minister. It can be seen that at least in the conversation with Casanova, Dmowski was still as much focused on Russian internal politics, as on the purely Polish question. In addition, Dmowski's anti-Germanism is clearly perceived throughout the fragments of the conversation presented by Casanova on 'ABC'.

Going back to the description of the passivist movement, according to Janusz Pajewski, in the occupied lands of the Kingdom (Russian Poland):

“passivists, convinced that the main danger for the nation was the threat caused by the Germans, that a victory of the Central Powers would be a defeat for Poland, that the chances of victory were rather on the side of the coalition”, believed it didn't make sense to cooperate with the occupying Central Powers and the best strategy was to wait for a military defeat of Germany and Austria before taking action<sup>373</sup>”.

Pajewski also explains that the passivists created the so-called Miedzypartyne Koło Polityczne [Inter-party Political Circle], which gathered Endecja (National Democrats) with realists and other minor political groups<sup>374</sup>.

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antepasados. ¿Suena ya esa hora en el reloj de la justicia?—Tocan a vísperas—me contestó Dmowski, con buen humor meridional, y añadió:--Seguirán a estos días, años de perturbaciones. Nosotros no alcanzaremos el fruto. Pero será para otra generación. Hoy Rusia pelea con Alemania, que la ha tenido sojuzgada tanto tiempo, en los campos de batalla y desde la presidencia del Consejo de Ministros. —¿Conoce usted al gran duque Nicolás?—Sí, lo visité en su Cuartel general, en el tren que le sirve, y a su Estado mayor, de alojamiento. Altísimo, enjuto, tiene su cortesanía la seriedad de una preocupación constante: su responsabilidad de generalísimo de los Ejércitos. No ríe, pero mira lealmente, y es noble en su postura y ademanes. [...] —¿Es cierto, como afirma su ayudante el conde P., que tiene gran simpatía por los polacos?—Por la causa polaca, sí. Por los polacos no sé. Siendo por vocación soldado, debe apreciar en nosotros el temperamento militar que ha hecho gloriosa nuestra Historia. Como el poeta, ahora mismo pueden decir los nuestros: “No hay un puñado de tierra sin una tumba polaca”. Un millón doscientos mil luchan en los Ejércitos de las tres partes de Polonia, y nuestros “legionistas” han recibido el bautismo de sangre bravamente en Radom”.

<sup>373</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918*, op. cit., p. 109. Original quoted text: “Pasywiści w przekonaniu, że narodowi główne niebezpieczeństwo zagrażało ze strony Niemców, że wygrana państw centralnych byłaby klęska Polski, że zresztą szanse zwycięstwa były raczej po stronie koalicji, uchylali się od wszelkiej współpracy o charakterze politycznym z okupantem, uważali że kraj w warunkach okupacji prowadzić może tylko politykę wyczekiwania na przegrana niemiecka”.

<sup>374</sup> *Ibidem*.

This organization is mentioned in the Spanish press, leaving telegraphic press notes aside, only once in the Great War period, which may indicate its international impact was low given that Spanish newspapers used as sources not only their correspondents texts but the foreign press. For instance, neither Stanislaw Grabski nor Wincenty Witos were mentioned by the Spanish newspapers' own comments and analysis, at least not in the examined Spanish press sources, of the Great War period. As a matter of fact, Grabski was mentioned by 'El Sol' on January 10, 1918, but only as one of the signers of the manifesto issued by the Międzypartyjne Koło Polityczne addressed to the Allies and neutral countries. This manifesto expressed an opposition to a resolution of the Polish question as part of a separate peace between Soviet Russia and the Central Powers.

Precisely, Chwalba claims that in Galicia, nationalists like Grabski, "officially announced loyalty to the dynasty, what didn't prevent them from flirting with *Moscowphiles* from Eastern Galicia against Ukrainian nationalists and think positively about the Entente and Russia". He adds that nationalists were critical of Austria-Hungary's dependency on Germany, "in their view the biggest enemy of Poles". The author also explains that Wincenty Witos-led PSL Piast Populists, who focused a lot on improving the situation of peasants but also promoted a national identity among them, "although loyal towards Vienna, hoped that the development of the Polish question during the war leads to the creation of an independent Poland. In order to make their program a reality, they kept good relations both with the irredentist movement and with Endecja". He adds that Witos, in fact, also belonged to the passivist political organization Liga Narodowa (National League)<sup>375</sup>. According to Chwalba, the so-called realists in the Kingdom had a similar view to Endecja. Among realists one could find "the Polish conservatives of the Russian partition, mainly landowners, aristocrats, intelligentsia, priests, who connected their loyalist stand with their link to conservative values and with their faith in the success of Russia and Poland". They had a close relation with "Russian power elites". They believed in Russian territorial and institutional integrity and, by that, they expected this "brings Poles national relief, that it wakes the Polish question up". Chwalba highlights that when the

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<sup>375</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 151. Original quoted texts: „oficjalnie głosili wierność dynastii, co nie przeszkadzało im flirtować z moskalofilami ze wschodniej Galicji przeciwko ukraińskim narodowcom i myśleć pozytywnie o Entencie i Rosji”. ; „największego ich zdaniem wroga Polaków”, „choć lojalni wobec Wiednia, mieli nadzieje, że rozwój sprawy polskiej w czasie wojny doprowadzi do powstania niezawisłej Polski. Aby zrealizować swój program, utrzymywali dobre relacje zarówno z obozem irredentystów, jak i z Endecja”.

war started “young aristocrats and landowners, realists volunteered for the Russian army”<sup>376</sup>. No references to realist Polish politicians are found in the examined Spanish newspapers’ own comments and analysis regarding the Polish question.

Silesian Wojciech Korfanty, one of the top Polish politicians in German Poland, was another of the leading passivists, to whom Spanish press dedicated prominent space. Antonio Muñoz interviewed Wojciech Korfanty in Berlin and the result of the interview, one of the highlights on the Polish question in the Great War’s Spanish press, was published on April 26, 1916 on (the first page of) pro-allied newspaper ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’:

Muñoz: “You Poles must be happy- I tell him -all the countries in war have promised Poland’s freedom when peace is signed.”

Korfanty: “-The sentimental policy that regarding our country has been followed before the war hasn’t led but to worsen our situation, the sympathies that almost all the countries show for us never translated into force actions that imposed, at least, the conservation of certain privileges agreed on the Congress of Vienna. And in reality, it turns out to be a bloody irony reading, for example, that in the article 6 of such treaty that the city of Cracow would be “in perpetuity a free, independent and strictly neutral city”. In 1846 it was transferred to the Austrian crown, as many other conquered territories.”

Muñoz: “-What do you think the Allies could do to guarantee your future independence?”

Korfanty: “Signing a solemn pact among all of them. Russia has promised us to give us our freedom and we believe her: the central Empires have lately treated with the Polish question, and we must do the same [believe them]. In fact, we must show ourselves distrustful to such a promising future. Poland represents, even poorly managed, a source of great wealthiness. when the decisive moment of the reinstatements, even assuming good will from the rulers of their respective countries, difficulties will be encountered to convince the peoples of the three nations that distributed ours”.

Muñoz: “-You don’t believe, then, in the German promises?”

Korfanty: “-You ask me a question very difficult to answer to in the situation in which I find myself. The Allies are proclaiming themselves advocates of the small nations’ rights. Germany, because of the established regime, tends, naturally, to the expansion

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<sup>376</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 191. „[...] polscy konserwatyści zaboru rosyjskiego, głównie ziemianie, arystokraci, inteligenci, kapłani, którzy łączyli lojalistyczną postawę z przywiązaniem do wartości konserwatywnych oraz z wiarą w sukces Rosji, a tym samym Polski, „młodzi arystokraci i ziemianie-realiści, chętnie zgłaszali się do wojska na ochotnika”.



of its territory. In the German Parliament we repeatedly exposed on which we forged our hopes. In an interview it would be scabrous to explain to you the limits of our thoughts.” [...]

Muñoz: “the evocation of such magnificence would seem to make you doubt about the possibility of seeing your hopes come true. Korfanty: “We are too rich [...] and the reconstitution of Poland seems impossible to me”<sup>377</sup>.

At this point of the interview Muñoz, seeing his questions could be uncomfortable for Korfanty, decided to change the topic to economic matters<sup>378</sup>.

In addition, Muñoz explained that, before the interview, Korfanty argued in front of all his guests that:

“the belligerent states understood, since the beginning of the war, the significance of the Polish question and have tried to conquer our sympathies. The assertive attitude of Poles in one or another field of the combatants is a very important factor. When countries such as Bulgaria, Greece and Romania weigh a lot in the scale

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<sup>377</sup> “Korfanty, Las veladas de un diputado polaco”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 26.04.1916, p. 1. Original quoted text: “Muñoz: --Ustedes deben estar contentos—le digo—, todos los países en guerra han prometido la libertad de Polonia cuando se firme la paz. Korfanty: --La política sentimental que con respecto a nuestro país se ha seguido antes de la guerra no ha conducido sino a empeorar nuestra situación. Las simpatías que por nosotros muestran casi todos los países no se tradujeron nunca por actos de fuerza que impusieran, por lo menos, la conservación de ciertos privilegios acordados en el Congreso de Viena. Y en verdad resulta una ironía sangrienta el leer, por ejemplo, en el artículo 6 de tal Tratado, que la ciudad de Cracovia sería “villa a perpetuidad libre, independiente y estrictamente neutral”. En 1846 pasaba a la Corona de Austria, como tantos otros territorios conquistados. Muñoz:—¿Qué cree usted que pudieran hacer los aliados para garantizarles su futura independencia?. Korfanty:-Firmar un pacto solemne entre todos ellos. Rusia nos ha prometido devolvernos la libertad, y la creemos: Los Imperios centrales han tratado últimamente de la cuestión polonesa, y debemos hacer lo mismo. En el fondo tenemos que mostrarnos desconfiados de tan risueño porvenir. Polonia representa, aun mal administrada, una fuente de grandísima riqueza; cuando llegue el momento decisivo de las reintegraciones, aun suponiendo buen deseo a los gobernantes de los respectivos países, se tropezara con dificultades para convencer a los pueblos de las tres naciones que se distribuyeron la nuestra. Muñoz: --“usted no cree, pues, en las promesas alemanas?— Korfanty: “Me hace usted una pregunta difícil de contestar en la situación en la que me encuentro. Los aliados proclámanse defensores del derecho de las pequeñas naciones; Alemania, por el régimen establecido, tiende, naturalmente, a la expansión de su territorio. En el Parlamento alemán expusimos repetidas veces en qué forjábamos nuestras esperanzas, en una interview sería escabroso explicarle los límites de nuestro pensamiento”. [...] Muñoz:--la evocación de tanta magnificencia diríase que le hace dudar de la posibilidad de ver realizadas sus esperanzas. Korfanty:--Somos demasiado ricos—añade al fin—y me parece imposible la reconstitución de Polonia”.

<sup>378</sup> *Ibidem*.

of the current European crisis, estimate yourself what would a population of 22 million inhabitants mean, whose soldiers can be compared with the first in the world”<sup>379</sup>.

In his answers, Korfanty clearly showed that he believed in the Allies giving Poland political freedom, although he was sceptical about Poland obtaining its independence, rather than in the Central Powers liberating Poland. It is clear that the interview was very convenient for a pro-allied newspaper, since Korfanty depicted the Entente with a good light, as reliable and tolerant regarding the Polish question, and as an advocate of freedom, in opposition to German expansionism and imperialism. It is worth remarking that in the examined Spanish press sources there are no references to another leading Polish politician in German Poland: Marian Seyda. What is interesting is that the Spanish newspapers overall published interviews of their correspondents with both a top passivist from Russian Poland, Dmowski (twice) and a top passivist from German Poland, Korfanty (only once). The three interviews are completely different in content and form and were done in different stages of the war, with completely different statuses of the Polish question at the time.

In relation to Korfanty’s views that were shown in his interview for the Spanish press, Chwalba argues that since the late 19th century until just before the Great War, Endecja’s politicians changed their anti-Russian view for an anti-German view. The author clarifies that:

“nationalists recognised the Reich and the German element as the most important enemy of Poland and the Poles. They critically assessed the Germanization policy in the Prussian partition and in Silesia conducted by the Reich authorities with the support of German chauvinist environment”<sup>380</sup>.

Chwalba also explains that already for a few years before the war, the main political formation in the Kingdom (Russian Poland) was Dmowski’s National Democracy (Endecja), which dominated among lower bourgeoisie and peasants. The author adds that Dmowski was convinced that the Kingdom, Russian Poland, would obtain “concessions” from Russia because

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<sup>379</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: „Los estados beligerantes comprendieron desde el comienzo de la guerra la importancia de la cuestión polonesa y han tratado de conquistar nuestras simpatías. La actitud decidida de los polacos en uno u otro campo de los combatientes es un factor muy apreciable. Cuando países como Bulgaria, Grecia y Rumanía pesan abrumadoramente en la balanza de la actual crisis europea, juzgue usted lo que supondría una población de 22 millones de habitantes, cuyos soldados pueden compararse con los primeros del mundo”.

<sup>380</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918, op. cit.*, p. 190. Original quoted text: “Narodowcy uznali Rzesze i żywioł niemiecki za najważniejszego wroga Polski i Polaków. Krytycznie oceniali politykę germanizacyjną w zaborze pruskim i na Śląsku prowadzona przez władze Rzeszy przy wsparciu szowinistycznych środowisk niemieckich”.

of the positive changes for Poles that occurred after the 1905 Russian Revolution, and explains that: “[...]more and more Poles, not only industrialists and bankers, for many years related to the Russian markets, but also peasants and intelligentsia, workers and small bourgeoisie, trusted in Endecja, counting on a victory of Russia in the upcoming conflict[...]”<sup>381</sup>. Chwalba adds that Endecja also dominated the Polish Circle in the Duma in Petrograd at that moment<sup>382</sup>.

One of the mentions in the Spanish press of one the leading passivism advocates, Count Wielopolski, occurred when ‘ABC’'s correspondent in the Eastern front Demetrio Kobinoff<sup>383</sup> reported on November 13, 1914, that a Polish man who hosted him in Warsaw explained to him that after the Great Duke's manifesto, a Polish commission was created in Petrograd, presided by Wielopolski, in order to make sure that the Russian promises became a reality, but among the commission members only Wielopolski was received by the Tsar for “a few moments”. In the same text, Kobinoff claimed that Poles in Warsaw did not believe “in the autonomy recently offered by Russia to Poland”<sup>384</sup>.

Another of the passivists that was mentioned in the Spanish press was Zygmunt Balicki. On November 7, 1916 ‘ABC’ published an article written in September by Sofía Casanova about the death of Zygmunt Balicki in Petrograd. Casanova argued that Balicki was the “guide and apostol” for a generation of young Poles who, thanks to his effort, 25 years earlier had joined the Polish cause in different environments, and together with another generation, also inspired by Balicki, were still willing to energetically “fight for independence”. Casanova also explained that Balicki was an optimist, but the war situation in the Polish lands in favour of the Central Powers broke that optimism. She highlighted that Balicki “intervened in the government dealings, in the bargaining of favours designed by Russia to be bestowed [to Poland] when her armies recover the lost territory and the flag of the muscovite Tsar waves again in Warsaw's Royal Palace by the Vistula”<sup>385</sup>. By “favour bargaining”, Casanova referred to the negotiation of Russian political concessions to Poland. It is a good idea to compare the importance given by Casanova to Balicki in the Polish cause, with Balicki's importance in the

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<sup>381</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 191. Original quoted text: “[...] coraz liczniejsi Polacy, nie tylko przemysłowcy, bankierzy, od lat związani z rynkami rosyjskimi, lecz także chłopci, inteligenci, robotnicy, drobnomieszczanie ufali endecji, licząc na zwycięstwo Rosji w przyszłym konflikcie [...]”.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 191-192.

<sup>383</sup> No background or biographical information has been found on this war correspondent.

<sup>384</sup> “ABC en Varsovia”, ‘ABC’, 13.11.1914, p. 7-8.

<sup>385</sup> “ABC en Rusia, notas tristes”, ‘ABC’, 7.11.1916, p. 6.

views of Polish historians. Although Janusz Pajewski only mentions Balicki twice<sup>386</sup> in *Odbudowa państwa polskiego 1914-1918*, the author claims that “the doctrinal basis of National Democracy’s ideology was given in the first place by the books *Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka* by Roman Dmowski and Zygmunt Balicki’s *Egoizm narodowy wobec etyki*”<sup>387</sup>. Chwalba mentions Balicki only once, when he explains that he and Wiktor Jaroński tried to create the Polish Legions under the Russian army, following the view held by some realists and nationalists that creating Polish units was a good idea in order to obtain more from Tsarist Russia regarding Poland’s political freedom. Chwalba explains that, initially, Balicki’s proposal was rejected by Russia, but later on, when Witold Ostojka-Gorczyński took this project, it was finally accepted, and eventually led to the creation of Legion Puławski. Chwalba does not mention anything about Balicki’s contribution to the ideas of the National Democracy movement, whereas Kisielewski does not mention Balicki in the context of the Great War period, but claims that he was one of the founders in 1893 of Liga Narodowa with Dmowski and Jan Ludwik Popławski. This author also mentions that Balicki was a member of the Związek Zagraniczny Socjalistów Polskich (Foreign Union of Polish Socialists) until 1895, and, because of this, before the war he was conciliatory with Polish socialists<sup>388</sup>.

As already mentioned, Sofia Casanova, despite being keen on passivism regarding the Polish question, was always very critical of Russia’s policy towards Poland. A good example of this is found, for instance, in April 1915, when she criticised that Polish municipalities were given partial autonomy by Russia but not full freedom regarding schooling language and administration rights. Casanova also highlighted the importance for Russia’s sake of treating Poles well and asked for a fair treatment of Poland in an eventual peace conference ending the war, with a different result than that of the 1815 Congress of Vienna, which allowed the Partitions of Poland to persist. She highlighted that:

“[...]whose western culture is the base for modern life[...] It would be worth that Europe knew the tricks and details of this policy, so that in the peace Congress no new injustices will be performed with a nation that defends between the two colossi-Germans and Moscovites-its Catholic religion and its land. A nation that freed Europe

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<sup>386</sup> The second reference to Balicki consists in explaining that Balicki, as director of the military section of the Polish National Committee in Warsaw was involved in the creation of a Polish army unit within the Russian army, see: J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa państwa polskiego 1914-1918*, Warszawa 1985, p. 62.

<sup>387</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 37.

<sup>388</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

in Vienna (1683) from the Turkish invasion, and that being eight times bigger than Belgium, is, like Belgium, devastated, burnt”<sup>389</sup>.

Another of the highlights of the Polish question in the Spanish press occurred in July 1918, in Paris, when ‘El Sol’'s correspondent Corpus Barga interviewed Roman Dmowski, leader of the National Democrats, previous referent of the passivist view and by then focused on obtaining the support of the Western Allies for Polish independence. Barga told Dmowski that "Russia does not exist anymore, the auspicious moment of Poland appears, and the Polish problem is updated in Austria". In line with this question, Dmowski affirmed that out of the three powers that had divided Poland, Austria was the one that had the best consideration with the Poles "because it needed them"<sup>390</sup>. It can be interpreted that Dmowski, in his response to Barga, accused Austria of instrumentalizing a positive policy towards Poles, meaning of conducting such a policy because of its needs, and not because of good will towards Poles. In any case, these views about Austria being favourable to Poland shared by Dmowski and Barga can also be related to Casanova's words on her aforementioned December 1915 article, titled “Polonia, Un problema internacional”<sup>391</sup>.

Furthermore, in the Paris interview, Dmowski also assured to Barga, in reference to the international policy of the desired new state, that “Poland does not have the Pyrenees and, to be, it will have to be strong”. Additionally, it is surprising that Dmowski, asked by Barga about the territorial organization of the reborn Polish state, answered that: "Centralization gives rise to radicalism, and decentralization to democracy". This idea in Dmowski's response seems closer to Piłsudski's federalist conception for the territorial organization and political system of the reborn Polish state, than to Dmowski's agglomeration-based conception, meaning a single centralised state, mainly inhabited by Poles<sup>392</sup>.

A month before the interview, Barga wrote about Poland's independence in his chronicle, after attending the delivery of flags of the Polish first division belonging to the French army, known in Poland as Błękitna Armia, (The Blue Army) or Haller's Army. Barga informed

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<sup>389</sup> “ABC en Varsovia, ¡domingo de resurrección!”, ‘ABC’, 29.04.1915, p. 2-4. Original quoted text: “[...] cuya cultura occidental es la base de la vida moderna [...] Valdría la pena que conociera Europa las trapacerías y pormenores de la política esta, para que en el Congreso de la paz no se cometan nuevas injusticias con un pueblo que defiende entre los dos colosos -germanos y moscovitas -su región católica y su tierra. Un pueblo que liberó a Europa en Viena (1683) de la invasión turca, y que siendo ocho veces mayor que Bélgica, está cual Bélgica, arrasada...calcinada”.

<sup>390</sup> “C. Barga, Una entrevista con Roman Dmowski”, “El Sol”, 24.07.1918, p. 1.

<sup>391</sup> “Polonia, un problema internacional”, ‘ABC’, 2.12.1915, p. 3.

<sup>392</sup> “C. Barga, Una entrevista con Roman Dmowski”, “El Sol”, 24.07.1918, p. 1.

with many details about this event of great importance for Poland and assured in his chronicle that he had "attended the rebirth of the Polish state". The Spanish journalist described the attire and appearance of the Polish soldiers and included in his article both a translation of Dmowski's speech to the Polish soldiers and a translation of the pronouncement by the President of the French Republic, Raymond Poincaré. During this ceremony, Barga spoke with Dmowski, to whom, in his press chronicle from the event, he referred as "President of the Polish Committee" and agreed with the Polish politician the interview that would take place a few weeks later<sup>393</sup>.

The Polish National Committee created in 1917 by the passivist National Democrats, based in France, was very often mentioned by telegraphic press notes published by the here examined Spanish newspapers. However, in regard to the Spanish newspapers' own comments and analysis during the war, the Committee was not mentioned. However, on December 27, 1918, when Poland was already *de facto* independent, 'La Época' published a manifesto of the Polish National Committee, in which the Polish political organization made a series of comments about the news published in previous weeks about pogroms allegedly committed by Poles taking place in the Polish lands, namely in Galicia and the Kingdom<sup>394</sup>. It is also worth noting that 'El Debate' used the wording "Polish delegation in Paris" instead of "Polish National Committee" when on December 8, 1918 it reported that a group of Spanish intellectuals had sent a telegram to Dmowski protesting for the treatment of Jews in Russian Poland<sup>395</sup>. More about this topic can be read in chapter 5 of this work.

Last but not least, in relation to passivism, although less relevant to understand this political movement, it is worth adding that on an article published in November 1918, Casanova explained that her brother in law Marian Lutosławski<sup>396</sup> was a representative of the Warsaw Civic Committee, which helped many Poles who left Russian Poland for Russia in 1915. Casanova added that this was being honoured in Warsaw by the Regency Council and by Poles saved by the Lutosławski brothers<sup>397</sup>. Andrzej Chwalba explains that Marian and Józef Lutosławski were among those Polish politicians that decided to leave the Kingdom and enter Russia before the German occupation in 1915<sup>398</sup>.

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<sup>393</sup> "Las tropas polacas. Estrega de banderas. Discursos entusiastas". "El Sol", 23.06.1918, p. 2.

<sup>394</sup> "Un comunicado del comité nacional polaco", 'La Época', 27.12.1918, p. 5.

<sup>395</sup> "Los judíos en Polonia", 'El Debate', 8.12.1918, p. 4.

<sup>396</sup> Both Marian and Józef Lutosławski, brothers of Sofia Casanova's husband, were killed by the Bolsheviks in 1918.

<sup>397</sup> "ABC en Rusia. Los crímenes de la revolución", 'ABC', 4.11.1918, p. 3-4.

<sup>398</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

## Spain's reactions to Revolutionary Russia's messages to Poland in late March 1917

Last but not least, regarding the passivist Polish political movement in the Great War, it is also a good idea to analyse Spanish reactions to the political offers made to Poland after the February Russian Revolution by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' deputies on March 27, 1917 and by the Russian Provisional Government two days later, on March 29, 1917. These Russian messages to the Poles had an enormous importance in the development of the Polish question during the Great War, because these started encouraging the Allies in Western Europe to take action in favour of Poland's independence, since no longer there was in Russia an official political and diplomatic opposition to Poland's self-government development that prevented the Western Powers from supportive diplomatic movements in this direction after the end of the Tsarist regime caused by the revolution<sup>399</sup>. Tadeusz Kisielewski claims that "the February Revolution in Russia speeded a change of both Pilsudski's and the Western Powers' stand on the Polish question"<sup>400</sup>. However, Kisielewski also claims that the October Revolution was a more important turning point for the Polish question in this sense than the March events, because it was after the Bolsheviks took power, that the Western governments stopped dealing with a "Russian government whose interests" they were willing to "respect"<sup>401</sup>. Norman Davies claims that "in 1917–1918 the policy of all the Western Powers towards Poland changed out of all recognition" and argues that this was "partly as a result of the Russian collapse", also mentioning "the American entry in the war" and the Allies' attempt to "embarrass Germany" as causes of this change of attitude in the West towards the Polish question<sup>402</sup>.

In regard to the Spanish reactions to these two Russian messages about the Polish question, first of all, it must be explained that is surprising not having found on the examined diplomatic correspondence any references by then Spain's ambassador in Petrograd Luis Valera y Delavat (Marquis of Villasinda)<sup>403</sup> or by the embassy's chargé d'affaires Justo Garrido Cisneros, to the message by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies message

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<sup>399</sup> See: S. Askenazy, *Uwagi*, Warszawa 1924, p. 457–458; W. Toporowicz, *Rosyjskie koła rządowe wobec kwestii polskiej w latach 1914–1917*, „Dzieje Najnowsze” 1972, nr 4, p. 21–52; L. Bazyłow, *Odrodzenie sprawy polskiej w kraju i w świecie (1900–1918)*, [in:] *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, t. 3: 1795–1918, red. L. Bazyłow, Warszawa 1982, p. 869–885; B. Gąsieniec, M. Wołos, *Człowiek z cienia. Aleksander Więckowski (1854–1919) – szkic biograficzny*, „Res Gestae. Czasopismo Historyczne” 2024, t. 18, p. 148–149.

<sup>400</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 162. Original quoted text: „Rewolucja lutowa w Rosji przyspieszyła przełom w stanowiskach zarówno Piłsudskiego, jak i mocarstw zachodnich wobec kwestii polskiej”.

<sup>401</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 163.

<sup>402</sup> N. Davies, *God's Playground. A history of Poland*, vol. II: 1795 to the Present, Oxford 2005, p. 286.

<sup>403</sup> <https://dbe.rah.es/biografias/75153/luis-valera-y-delavat>

to the Polish nation on March 27, and even more surprising, not having found references from these Spanish diplomats to the declaration by the Provisional Russian government to the Poles on March 29. Documentation with these comments could have been lost or misplaced on another folder of Spain's Archivo Histórico Nacional. Further research after this project could check if any references to this question were made by any other Spanish diplomats in the Ministry or in other countries at the time.

The references in the Spanish press own comments on international affairs to these two messages to the Poles are also scarce, although there were many foreign press notes referring to the Provisional Government's declaration to the Poles, but there were no press notes among the examined press sources referring to the message of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies to the Polish nation.

The most elaborated reaction in the Spanish press to these political offers or promises to the Poles resulting from the February Revolution appeared on April 2, 1917, on 'La Correspondencia de España'. The newspaper's editors dedicated a small article on the cover page to the Polish question and first stated that: "the Provisional Russian government has published a manifesto in which it is announced to Poles that the new Russia makes them free and united. The document has a truly admirable bravery, nobility and sincerity. And it will cause a profound sensation, not only in Poland, but in the rest of Europe and in the whole world"<sup>404</sup>. Then, they argued that after the Provisional Russian government's manifesto to Poles, these would be even more opposed to the Central Powers' offer to enlist them to a new Polish army under the Central Powers' command in exchange for having their own government. The newspaper mentioned the German-Austrian political offer to Poles was "*sub conditione*"<sup>405</sup>. Because of this, 'La Correspondencia de España's described the Central Powers' political offers to Poles as much worse than the new (non-Tsarist) Russia's offer, reflecting the first in a very negative light, mainly focusing on the lack of reunion with German and Austrian-owned Polish lands and also highlighting the delay in the delivery of the promised political projects for Poland. 'La Correspondencia de España' argued that the Central Powers' problem in their strategy towards Poland was that they did not offer unity with Poznań region and Galicia and only "promised Russian Poles a shadow of autonomy in exchange of military cooperation"<sup>406</sup>.

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<sup>404</sup> "Polonia", 'La Correspondencia de España', 2.04.1917, p. 1.

<sup>405</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>406</sup> *Ibidem*.



It can be stated this was a very favourable reaction to the Russian offer to the Poles, in line with the pro-allied stance of the newspaper, which used this opportunity to criticise the previous Central Powers' political offer to Poland on the basis of the November 5, 1916 proclamation. A different reaction than 'La Correspondencia's is seen on 'El Debate's issue of April 3, 1917<sup>407</sup>, in which Martín Llorente (under the pseudonym Armando Guerra) made the following comment on the Russian Provisional Government's Manifesto to the Poles:

“Not, what will be needed, in order to consolidate the new state of things is peace, for which Poles are longing. From this turbulent river, Poles are going to see their kingdom rise again, because Germans, Austrians, and Russians go out of their way to offer them [Poles] their dreamed independence, and if the former give them a lot, the latter give them more”<sup>408</sup>.

Thus, it can be stated that Llorente rightly interpreted that the Russian Provisional Government's manifesto to Poles was part of a competition between the Central Powers and Russia to bring Poles to their side in the war, by means of political promises about Poland's self-government or independence. It must be highlighted that Llorente expected Poland to become a “kingdom” again as a result of this competition to offer Poland the best deal, but Llorente did not use the word “independent” along with the word “kingdom”. It is, into a certain extent, surprising that Llorente, given his pro-Germanic profile, did not use the opportunity to criticise Russia, but one can think that it would be hypocritical from him to criticise Russia for the exact same or at least similar political behaviour the Central Powers had previously had towards Poland.

The wording “independent state”, however, is seen on a third comment in the Spanish press in relation to the Petrograd Soviet and Provisional government's manifestos to the Poles. These words were used on 'ABC' by Sofía Casanova, who mentioned the new post-Tsarist Russia's offers to the Poles, but surprisingly did not elaborate much on this question. In an article published on June 11, 1917 and most likely written in April 1917 (the article, unlike in many of Casanova's articles, did not include a reference to the month in which it was written), Sofía Casanova, after mentioning the reforms introduced by “the Ministry of the new regime and the Assembly of the Representatives of the Peoples and the Army”<sup>409</sup>, explained to her readers that:

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<sup>407</sup> “La situación militar”, 'El Debate', 3.04.1917, p. 2.

<sup>408</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>409</sup> “ABC en Rusia, las convulsiones revolucionarias”, 'ABC', 11.06.1917, p. 6.

“the manifesto to the workers of the world, the brotherly one to the Poles followed by the governmental act which (with restrictions) is bestowing Poland the right to raise as an independent state, unified with the lands that it will take from Germany are thrilling us and giving us endless surprises”<sup>410</sup>.

When analysing Casanova’s wording, it is important to highlight that she mentioned the “restrictions” of the political offer in the Russian Provisional Government’s manifesto, but she wrote that Russia was “bestowing Poland the right to raise as an independent state” and she did not write “Russia wants to bestow Poland [...]”, so, in other words, it can be hypothesized that Casanova treated the manifesto’s offer, despite its limitations, as a confirmed fact, as something that had already started, and also as something that caused positive emotions, both in her and among Poles. In addition, because of the wording she used, one could also wonder if Casanova took for granted or not that, at some point, this new Polish independent state would unite all the Polish lands, due to Russia’s takeover of the Polish lands under German and Austrian sovereignty, or if, maybe she only regarded this scenario as a future possibility. In addition, one can wonder if by “lands that it will take from Germany” she really considered the rest of Polish lands, or only the territories occupied by Germany as a result of the war. It is difficult to guess if Casanova believed these Russian promises to the Poles would have any real consequences on the political future of Poland, but it seems clear that her reaction to these was rather positive.

Leaving the Spanish press own comments aside, it is still worth adding that the full content of the Russian Government’s manifesto to the Poles appeared on March 31 on ‘La Época’<sup>411</sup>, and ‘ABC’<sup>412</sup>, and on April 1 on ‘El Debate’<sup>413</sup>. Neither of these newspapers did include any editorial comment on this question. It is also worth underlining that ‘ABC’ included the press note with the whole text of the Provisional’s Government manifesto between pages 15 and 17, with an advertisements page in between<sup>414</sup>.

Additionally, on the first page of April 2, 1917 edition of ‘La Correspondencia de España’, we can see a press note titled: “Poland’s independence. Waiting for the Constituent Assembly” that corresponds to the exact same press note published on ‘La Época’ on April 1, 1917, referring to the Russian Provisional Government’s manifesto to Poland. ‘La Época’ titled the press note “the governments’ statement about Poland’s independence. The possessions of

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<sup>410</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>411</sup> “La Revolución en Rusia. Manifiesto del gobierno ruso a Polonia”, *La Época*, 31.03.1917, p. 3.

<sup>412</sup> “Manifiesto a los polacos”, ‘ABC’, 31.03.1917, p. 15, 17.

<sup>413</sup> “Últimos sucesos. Manifiesto del gobierno a los polacos”, ‘El Debate’, 1.04.1917, p. 2.

<sup>414</sup> “Manifiesto a los polacos”, ‘ABC’, 31.03.1917, p. 15, 17.

the Crown. Other measures”. In the text of the press note, in relation to the Polish question there was only the following:

“The government’s statement about Poland’s independence have caused a profound sensation. Poles are joyful and now declare that all the German propaganda system is going to miscarry pitifully. It is warned that the constituent committee will only be able to foresee an alliance between Poland and Russia and that the latter will have to give its consent to the territorial modifications of the Russian Empire, needed for the creation of Poland”<sup>415</sup>.

The same press note also appeared on ‘El Debate’ on the next day, April 2, 1917<sup>416</sup>. On the previous day, ‘El Imparcial’ had published a different press note about the Provisional Government’s manifesto to the Poles. The newspaper titled this press note in the following way: “Poland free. Manifesto of the Russian government to the Polish nation. Acknowledgement of the freedom and independence of the whole old Poland”<sup>417</sup>.

One should wonder, what did ‘El Imparcial’ understand by “the whole old Poland”? Below this press note the Spanish newspaper placed another note referring to the reactions of the French press to the Russian Provisional Government’s manifesto, “celebrating” that the Russian government “bestowed Poland its freedom”, ending this way the Prussian “vassalage of Poland”<sup>418</sup>. Two days later, on April 3, 1917, ‘La Correspondencia de España’ published a press note from Petrograd that the newspaper titled “Thanksgiving”, reporting that “the representatives of the [Polish] political parties have visited the Duma’s executive committee and the Council of the Workers’ delegates to express their gratitude for the project of creation of an independent Polish state”<sup>419</sup>. A very similar press note was published by ‘El Debate’ on April 3, 1917 under the title: “Poles, thankful”<sup>420</sup>. Two days later, the same newspaper published a press note from the province of Pola in Italy, titled “Poland’s form of government”, reporting that in the manifesto the Provisional government regarded the “political rights” given by Germany

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<sup>415</sup> “Las declaraciones del gobierno sobre la independencia de Polonia. Los bienes de la corona. Otras medidas”, ‘La Época’, 1.04.1917, p. 3.

<sup>416</sup> “Las nuevas disposiciones Júbilo en Polonia. Se suprimen las fiestas imperiales. Esperando a la Constituyente”, ‘El Debate’, 2.04.1917, p. 2.

<sup>417</sup> “Polonia libre. Manifiesto del gobierno ruso a la nación polaca. Reconocimiento de la libertad e la independencia de toda la antigua Polonia”, ‘El Imparcial’, 1.04.1917, p. 1.

<sup>418</sup> “Polonia libre. Manifiesto del gobierno ruso a la nación polaca. Comentarios franceses”, ‘El Imparcial’, 1.04.1917, p. 1.

<sup>419</sup> “En acción de gracias”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 3.04.1917, p. 1.

<sup>420</sup> “Los polacos agradecidos”, ‘El Debate’, 3.04.1917, p. 2.

and Austria Hungary to Poland as “illusory” and also claiming that the Provisional Government implied a Polish “state” in which “most Polish population” would be included. In addition, the press note reported that “a constitutional assembly” in Warsaw would be in charge of establishing the form of government of the new Polish Kingdom. However, the press note highlighted that the government’s words, at that point, would have “little influence over Poland” because the territorial demarcation of the new Polish state would require the approval of “the Russian constitutional conferences”<sup>421</sup>. On the same day, ‘El Imparcial’ published a press note from Petrograd titled ‘Poland’s independence’, in which it was reported that:

“it is known that due to the measures adopted by the German authorities, Poland’s civil population still ignores the proclamation of the Russian provisional government declaring the freedom of the [Polish] nation. Before that, the Germans want to simulate the promised constitution of Poland in order to be able to let [Poles know about] the Russian proclamation without any danger”<sup>422</sup>.

On April 10, 1917 ‘La Acción’, published a press note from Warsaw, which the newspaper titled “The Russian revolution. Russia against Poland”. This heading could lead the newspaper’s readers to understand there was tension between post-Tsarist Russia and Poles overall, what was very convenient taking into account the Germanophile profile of the newspaper. The text of the note was the following:

“Due to the Russian provisional government’s proclamation to the Poles, the League of the Polish Nationality published a declaration in which it is stated that the new point of view of the Russian government cannot in any way change a basic point of view, and that any political union of Poland with Russia would always be for Poland harmful as a nation and as a state. It ends saying that the only base of the relations between both states is Poland’s complete independence from Russia”<sup>423</sup>.

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<sup>421</sup> “Últimos sucesos, la forma de gobierno de Polonia”, ‘El Debate’, 5.04.1917, p. 2.

<sup>422</sup> “La independencia de Polonia”, ‘El Imparcial’, 5.04.1917, p. 2. Original quoted text: “Se sabe que, debido a las medidas adoptadas por las autoridades alemanas, la población civil de Polonia ignora todavía la proclama del Gobierno provisional ruso declarando la libertad de la nación. Los alemanes quieren antes simular la prometida constitución de Polonia para poder sin peligro, dejar conocer la proclama rusa”.

<sup>423</sup> “La Revolución en Rusia. Rusia contra Polonia”, ‘La Acción’, 10.04.1917, p. 4. Original quoted text: “Con motivo de la proclama del Gobierno provisional ruso a los polacos, publicó la Liga de la nacionalidad polaca una declaración en la que se afirma que el nuevo punto de vista del Gobierno ruso no puede en modo alguno variar su punto de vista fundamental y que cualquier unión política de Polonia con Rusia sería siempre para Polonia perjudicial en lo nacional y como Estado”.

The exact same note appeared on 'La Época' on the same day, under the slightly different title "La revolución en Rusia. Rusia y Polonia"<sup>424</sup>.

In conclusion, the impact of the two late March 1917 messages to the Poles by the Petrograd Soviet and by Post-tsarist Russian new political authorities in the Spanish press was very limited, particularly in the case of the first one, and one can hypothesize that this was due to the fact that, at the time, the focus of Spanish press editors and contributors was still on the Russian Revolution itself. Only Sofía Casanova, Martín Llorente and 'La Correspondencia de España's editors, although the latter mainly in order to make a comparison with the Central Powers' stand on the Polish question, really placed their attention onto this matter.

## **Irredentism**

Although there were several mentions of Polish politicians with this view, especially Piłsudski<sup>425</sup>, throughout the Great War, among the analysed Spanish press sources there was only one explicit reference to Polish irredentism. On April 2, 1917 pro-Entente newspaper 'La Correspondencia de España' claimed that in Galicia and in Poland there are "many irredentists"<sup>426</sup>. What should we understand by "irredentists" in this context? One could interpret that 'La Correspondencia de España' generally referred to those Poles who advocated Poland's full independence, and were somehow critical of Germany's political project for Poland but mistrusted Russia. According to Andrzej Chwalba, by the beginning of the war, "the irredentists were the only Polish political group that claimed that their strategic goal is the achievement of a free, independent and republican Poland", but they did not consider a particular way to reach their goal. In Chwalba's view, irredentist regarded Russia as the shared enemy with Austria-Hungary, so this led them to support the Habsburg dual state, because "a weak Austria-Hungary was a more beneficial allied for irredentists than a strong Germany"<sup>427</sup>.

Chwalba also explains that in the context of German occupied Congress Poland, "among the activists the best organized political power was formed by the irredentists", and adds that

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<sup>424</sup> "La revolución en Rusia. Rusia y Polonia", 'La Época', 10.04.1917, p. 2.

<sup>425</sup> See: A. Garlicki, *Józef Piłsudski 1867–1935*, Warszawa 1988, p. 159–199; W. Suleja, *Mundur na nim szary... Rzecz o Józefie Piłsudskim (1867–1935)*, Warszawa 2018, p. 83–162.

<sup>426</sup> "Polonia", 'La Correspondencia de España', 2.04.1917, p. 1.

<sup>427</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 152. Original quoted text: „Irredentyści jako jedyni spośród polskich ugrupowań powiadali, że ich strategicznym celem jest osiągnięcie Polski wolnej, niepodległej i republikańskiej”; „Słabe Austro-Węgry były korzystniejszym sojusznikiem irredentystów niż silne Niemcy”.

their leader, Piłsudski became one of the most famous Polish politicians and generated enthusiasm among population due to his great qualities, attitude and “uncompromising independentism stand”<sup>428</sup>. So, according to the Polish historian, Piłsudski was the leader of the irredentists, who were, at least at the beginning of the war, a subgroup of the activists. In addition, Chwalba states that the irredentists, whose movement started in the Kingdom (Russian Poland) and then moved with its leaders to Galicia, were also divided among those from the PPS (Polish Socialist Party) and those who previously were in Endecja (National Democrats) but left this political movement when it changed to a pro-Russian position<sup>429</sup>.

Pajewski, meanwhile, does not mention the irredentists but, however, writes about part of the activists belonging to the “independentist bloc”. He claims that “the Polish People’s Party [Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe], known later as PSL-Wyzwolenie, created in December 1915 must be counted as activist, but in any case as part of the independentist bloc[...]”<sup>430</sup>. He mentions, apart from Piłsudski, the independentist tendencies of leftist activist Artur Śliwiński and of PPS Lewica [Left PPS] revolutionist Antoni Szczerkowski<sup>431</sup>. Pajewski’s vision is similar to that of Chwalba, who regards the irredentists as a subgroup of the activists<sup>432</sup>.

It can be concluded, also by looking at the Spanish sources, that after the Brest-Litovsk treaties in February/March 1918, and until November 1918 many Polish politicians, due to both disappointment or anger with the partitioning powers, and war-related events, both activists and passivists, changed to the field of irredentists or independentists. Among these, many, if not most, also influenced by Wilson’s point 13, believed in full Polish independence as a result of the Western Allies’ support for the Polish cause and their military victory. Chwalba claims that after Brest-Litovsk “the power of the independentist field really strengthened” and “the pro-allied environments also grew”<sup>433</sup>, whereas Pajewski uses the word “disorientation” to define the political situation in the Polish lands in spring 1918. However, at the same time this author highlights that the Regency Council, despite breaking relations with German and Austrian authorities in the Kingdom, after the February 9 Central Powers’ Treaty with Ukraine, in April

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<sup>428</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 268. Original quoted texts: “Wśród aktywistów najlepiej zorganizowaną siłę polityczną tworzyli irredentyści”; „bezkompromisowa postawa niepodległościowa”.

<sup>429</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 152.

<sup>430</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p.110. Original quoted text: „Zaliczyć należy Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe, zwane później PSL-Wyzwoleniem, utworzone w grudniu 1915 r.”.

<sup>431</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 110-111.

<sup>432</sup> A. Chwalba, *Wielka Wojna Polaków 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

<sup>433</sup> *Ibidem*, p.340. Original quoted text: „wzmocniły się siły obozu niepodległościowego”, „Urosły też środowiska proaliantkie”.

1918 ended this tense diplomatic situation, after both talks with Beseler about the future of the Kingdom and a German-Austrian rectification regarding the Chełm question took place<sup>434</sup>.

Among the examined Spanish sources, press aside, another reference to irredentism is seen in the 1919 book published in Spain in Spanish by Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda, in which the author stated that Germany had a very unfavourable view of “the irredentist Poles of the kingdom, which represent the idea of Russian Poland’s independence”. As an example of this, the author used the fact the Polish legions were not allowed to engage in the takeover of Warsaw, along with German troops, in August 1915. However, in his book, Granzów did not mention the Polish irredentists as a separate group in his list of three political movements (pro-Russian, pro-Austrian, pro-Western Allies) in the Polish lands during the war<sup>435</sup>, the same that historian Janusz Pajewski did many years later in his work *Odbudowa państwa polskiego*<sup>436</sup>.

Finally, in this analysis of the Polish political conceptions during the Great War through the lenses of Spanish sources, it is crucial to highlight that from the point of view of a Spanish native speaker, like the readers of Spanish press in the 1914-1918 period or the readers of Granzow’s book in 1919, the word ‘irredentism’ is much more clear and self-explanatory in the context of Polish politics, than the concepts of activism and passivism. For a Spaniard, even today, without further explanation, it would be very difficult to immediately understand what an activist or a passivist was, in relation to the Polish question, but very easy to understand what an irredentist was.

## Conclusions

The Polish question had a large impact in the Spanish press throughout the Great War and was clearly reflected under the prism of the strong polarization between Germanophile and pro-allied newspapers, contributors and correspondents. All in all, in Spain there was sympathy for the Polish question as well as concern about Poland, and willingness to contribute to charity actions in favour of Poland, because of the difficult socioeconomic situation Poles had to endure due to the fact their lands were one of the main battlefields in the Eastern Front.

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<sup>434</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 261-263.

<sup>435</sup> C. Granzów de la Cerda, *Polonia. Su gloria en el pasado, su martirio y su resurrección*, San Sebastián 1919, p. 247-248.

<sup>436</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*

Furthermore, Spain's diplomacy made an effort not to break Spain's neutrality, in relation to the Central Powers' creation of a Polish Kingdom in the conquered and occupied Russian Poland lands.

The complexity of the different Polish political movements was not well described by most Spanish newspapers, although the press referred to the political leaders of the Polish cause. This complex political reality, however, was more or less detailedly described by Sofía Casanova and was also quite in-depth depicted in Casimiro Granzów's book after the war in 1919.

Different views on the auspice that a new Polish state would need, under the Central Powers, or under the Entente, are seen in the comments on the Polish question throughout the war. Also, different views on the form of government, borders and functioning of a reborn Poland are seen in the examined Spanish press sources. In addition, most Spanish press editors and contributors saw Poland's independence as deserved, justified and needed, for several reasons.

## Views by Spain's chargé d'affaires in Warsaw on obtained Poland's independence and the Great War in 1919

In order to create a proper transition between Great War-focused chapter 1, and the remaining chapters of this work, focused mostly on the period November 1918-March 1921, it is worth explaining that on October 15, 1919, Spain's chargé d'affaires in Warsaw Fernando Gómez Contreras, in his report for Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema<sup>437</sup>, analysed the Polish question retrospectively, by looking at all what happened during the Great War, which

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<sup>437</sup> Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor, 1863-1945. Spain's State Minister in the periods 27.10.1913-8.12.1915, 2.06.1917-31.10.1917, 19.07.1919-12.08.1921. Recipient of most diplomatic correspondence on Polish affairs examined in this dissertation.



eventually led to Polish independence. The Spanish diplomat particularly focused on the relations between Polish political leaders and the Allies during the war. He mentioned three phases on the process of Polish independence, in his view: the first was the war period until German occupation of Russian Poland, the second one was the German occupation period and the third one, when, with the war resolved on the West, Poland had to fight on its own against the Bolsheviks on the East<sup>438</sup>.

It is important to highlight that Contreras claimed that: “[...]the part that Poland has taken in the World War, her sacrifices and the extent to which it has contributed to Germany’s defeat, do not correspond to the fearful and secondary role that the West wants to attribute to her”<sup>439</sup>. According to Contreras, Poland was being very moderate and was neither expressing its disappointment nor forwarding its complaints to the Allies, even though he predicted this could change in the future. The Spanish diplomat argued that Poland played a secondary role in international politics at that moment, and this was due to the fact that around the world there was a perception that Polish independence resulted from the new Wilsonian world order, and did not result from Poland’s fight for it. Contreras also argued that the Polish politicians’ modest and careful attitude in the peace conference also contributed to this image of Poland’s independence not being a direct consequence of the Poles’ fight and effort. He added that the secondary role attributed to Poland by world leaders was reflected in the following way: “their treaties - are bristling with plebiscites, their monetary unit devoid of value in foreign markets under the intolerable weight of the expenses of that war that they maintain in the East against Bolshevism and because that army in a plan of defensive on the Czech-German front, it is considered only as a small and natural effort that until now Poland had managed to avoid”<sup>440</sup>.

The Spanish diplomat argued that Poles clearly disagreed with this idea, spread around the world, that independence was not due to Polish actions in the war but due to external factors. In relation to this, Contreras added that military events in the Eastern front featuring Polish involvement on allied (Russian) side had had a great influence on military events on the Marne

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<sup>438</sup> See: J.S. Ciechanowski, *Położenie międzynarodowe oraz kształt terytorialny Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w roku 1919 z perspektywy hiszpańskiej dyplomacji*, „Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość”, nr 2 (38), 2021, p. 115–121.

<sup>439</sup> AHN, H2605, 15.10.1919, Spain’s chargé d’affaires in Warsaw Fernando Gómez Contreras to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor). Original quoted text: “[...]la parte que Polonia ha tomado en la guerra mundial, sus sacrificios y la medida en que ha contribuido a la derrota de Alemania, no corresponden al papel miedoso y secundario que el Occidente quiere atribuirle”.

<sup>440</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “sus tratados-- se hallan erizados de plebiscitos, su unidad monetaria desprovista de valor en los mercados extranjeros bajo el peso intolerable de los gastos de esa guerra que sostienen en el oriente contra el bolchevismo y porque en frío ese ejército en plan de defensiva en el frente checo-alemán, no es considerado sino como un pequeño y natural esfuerzo que hasta ahora había logrado evitarse Polonia”.

and Iser on the Western Front. He argued that Poles engaged a lot to fight along the Russians against the Germans, what helped the French to save Paris from being taken. Moreover, he highlighted that Poles did so, even knowing that with the Tsar the chances of getting independence were as low as with the Kaiser. Contreras added that Poles managed to put old hatred of Russians aside, despite being this difficult, to become Russian soldiers against the Germans. According to him, when most of Polish lands were occupied by the Germans, “the Poles resisted Germany's tempting proposals to form an army of half a million men to launch against the Allies”. Gómez Contreras also argued that Poles (and he agreed on that with Poles) saw themselves as having materially suffered more than Belgium and France and Poles also saw themselves as the only ones who opposed the German Empire for 125 years. The author claimed that Poland “was thrown to Teutonic voracity by improvident international diplomacy”. According to the Spanish diplomat, Polish efforts for survival since the Partitions were fairly used by Poles to justify a bigger role in international diplomacy, in front of the Entente, and to ask the Western Powers “that a worthy position may be reserved for it [Poland] in the triumphal procession that must pass in front of the very walls of Berlin”<sup>441</sup>.

It is worth adding here that a very similar view to that of Contreras was presented by Polish archaeologist Eugeniusz Frankowski in his 1919 book that reproduced the content of his lecture in Spain's Royal Geographical Society on May 5, 1919. Frankowski argued that Poland was reborn as a state “not due to caprices or conveniences of our friends, neither because of taking advantage of the mistakes of grandeur insanity of its [Poland's] executioners, but because of the miracle of endless love by millions of its sons”<sup>442</sup>. This tells us that Contreras was right in his interpretation of Polish impressions on merit attribution, internationally, for Polish independence.

Contreras argued that Poland was aware of having been a buffer or “defence shield” against Russia and against German domination of Eastern Europe, in the past. He added that Poland assumed this role for its future. Poles, according to the Spanish diplomat, expected that in return for the “security” Poland offered to the West, Poles would get concessions to “reconstitute its solid power”. He added: “Germany will be able to move at its whim those pawns that it has in its hands, Bohemia, Lithuania, Latvia and [...], while Poland armed to the teeth will have for many years to mount the guard and ensure those new values erected by the

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<sup>441</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>442</sup> E. Frankowski, *Polonia y su misión en Europa*, Madrid 1919, p. 3.

Peace Congress”<sup>443</sup>. We must understand this comment as a reference to the fact that Poles expected the Allies to give them concessions, when it comes to territorial disputes with Germany, Lithuania and Czechoslovakia, which would allow Poland to become a regional power. Not all of these concessions from the Entente took place, as it will be discussed in chapters 2 and 3.

It can be stated that although in Cronteras’ words there is criticism of the Allies’ attitude to Poland, we can very clear see hints of a pro-Entente stand in the Spanish diplomat. It is important to consider that he wrote these report retrospectively in 1919 and not during the war, and probably he would not have made such bluntly pro-allied comments during the conflict, in order to be in line with Spain’s official neutrality stand.

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<sup>443</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Y Alemania podrá mover a su capricho esos peones que tiene entre sus manos, la Bohemia, Lituania, la Letonia y la ¿, mientras que Polonia armada hasta los dientes deberá durante largos años montar la guardia y asegurar esos nuevos valores erigidos por el Congreso de la Paz”.

# CHAPTER 2: SPAIN AND POLAND'S WESTERN, SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN BORDERS 1918-1921

## Introduction

The Polish uprisings against Germany, especially in the case of Greater Poland, but also in Upper Silesia, and two plebiscites, in Upper Silesia and Eastern Prussia, especially the latter, determined the new border between Poland and Germany. After an armed conflict and several negotiations between Poles and Czechoslovaks, eventually the negotiations conducted by the Entente in the Spa conference determined the final border between Poland and Czechoslovakia.

All these complex political, diplomatic and military processes<sup>444</sup> were seen by Spain's diplomats and press editors, contributors, correspondents from a perspective highly influenced by the new world order, dominated by the Western Allies and characterised by the creation of many new states, that was being created in the aftermath of the Great War. Spain was not directly involved in the border changes and conflicts brought as a result of the war but certainly these, including the ones affecting Poland, had important echoes in the Iberian country<sup>445</sup>.

## Spain and the Greater Poland Uprising 1918-1919

Spain and Poland had not yet officialised relations during the uprising of the local Polish population in the Poznań region against German rule in late 1918 and early 1919. Therefore, due to the lack of a Spanish legation in Warsaw at the time, there are no diplomatic reports sent from Poland to Spain on that question that can be examined. No specific references to the Greater Poland Uprising have been found in the diplomatic correspondence from Spain's embassy in Berlin or from any other Spanish embassy.

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<sup>444</sup> In regard to reborn Poland's eastern borders, as it will be detailed on chapter 3 Lucjan Żeligowski's military conquest of the Vilna region after a staged rebellion and the failed attempt by the League of Nations to organize a plebiscite left Vilna in Polish hands. The March 1921 Treaty of Riga established the new border between Poland and the Soviet republics dividing Ukraine and Belarus between the former and the latter and eliminating them as independent political subjects.

<sup>445</sup> See: J.S. Ciechanowski, *Kształtowanie się ładu wersalskiego ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem II Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z perspektywy hiszpańskiej*, [in:] *Ład wersalski i zmiany terytorialne w Europie po I wojnie światowej*, red. Z. Girzyński, J. Kłaczek, Warszawa 2024, p. 125–150.

Only a tiny reference to the Poznań question appears in State's Ministry diplomatic correspondence, made while the uprising was still ongoing, on January 29, 1919, in relation to the request made on January 16, 1919 by Maurycy Zamoyski from the Polish National Committee to Spain's State Ministry to have a Polish National Committee (KNP) representative in the country with consular functions<sup>446</sup>. Diplomat José de Landecho y Allendesalazar from Spain's State Ministry, in an internal communication resulting from Zamoyski's request, argued that allowing a KNP's representative in Spain to act like a consul would be "prejudging Poland's future status and upsetting other states" because the borders and extension for the new Polish state had not been yet confirmed and there were territorial conflicts between Poland and other states over disputed areas. What really matters here is that, in his report, Landecho used as an argument for this refusal to Zamoyski's request the fact that: "the issuing of a certificate of Polish nationality [in Spain] to someone originally from Poznań or from Upper Silesia could cause claims by the German government because it would consider this contrary to Spain's neutrality"<sup>447</sup>. This indicates Greater Poland was not yet regarded by Spain's State Minister by January 29, 1919 as a territory belonging to new Polish state.

In the analysis of the echoes in the Spanish press of the Greater Poland Uprising, it is worth referring first to the usage of both the words 'Posen' and 'Posnania' (or Poznania). In most cases the word 'Posnania' was used for naming the region and the word 'Posen' for the city.

Foremost, it must be explained that in the Spanish press there were some reactions to the events in the Poznań region, although the impact of the Greater Poland Uprising was lower than the Upper Silesian conflict's one. Among the examined newspapers most references to the Greater Poland conflict are found in one newspaper: the pro-monarchy conservative Germanophile newspaper 'ABC'. This is partly due to the fact 'ABC', unlike other newspapers, had a permanent correspondent in Berlin by late 1918 and early 1919: Javier Bueno<sup>448</sup>. Many of the Spanish press references to the situation in Greater Poland, not only those by 'ABC's correspondent in Berlin, were related to the revolution situation in Germany, and were made more from the perspective of changes in Germany rather than changes in Poland. This Great

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<sup>446</sup> AHN, H2605, 19.01.1919, José de Landecho y Allendesalazar to Spain's State Minister Count of Romanones Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres.

<sup>447</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "la expedición de un certificado de nacionalidad polaca a un natural de la Posnania o de la Alta Silesia podría dar lugar a reclamaciones del gobierno alemán por considerarlo contrario a la neutralidad de España".

<sup>448</sup> Bueno used the pseudonym Antonio Azpeitua and was in Warsaw on the occasion of the November 5 Proclamation, witnessing this significant political event, as already explained in chapter 1.

Power-focused analysis of Polish affairs is something very common across many Spanish press sources throughout this project's examined period.

Most Spanish press articles dealing with the Greater Poland Uprising mention Ignacy Jan Paderewski arriving to Poznań on December 26 and the importance of this event, but do not refer explicitly to Paderewski's arrival as the main trigger of the Uprising. Rather, these refer to the withdrawal of the Allied flags and to German soldiers' as the insurgence's trigger. On January 29, 1919, Bueno reported about the events in Poznań in the following way: Poznań's province was under Polish control and Paderewski triumphally entered this city with British officers, then a German regiment that came back from the Eastern front removed the Entente countries flags in Poznań and, in response to this, the British officers that came to the city with Paderewski "protested in front of Poznań's general commander and threatened to send a note to generalissimo Foch", German soldiers tried to take control of the situation but were defeated by Poles. Bueno also reported that Poles "have machine guns, cannons, armoured cars and cannons that the [German] occupying army in Russia, upon returning, demoralized by the propaganda of [Friedrich] Ebert and [Philipp] Scheidemann, to the service of Judaism, sold them for a few marks"<sup>449</sup>. In addition, Bueno reported on the next events of the uprising: "All railway and telephone communication between the province of Posen and the rest of Germany is interrupted. The delegates sent by the provisional government of Ebert are stopped at the border established by the Polish-German soldiers, who instead of the cockades of the Empire, have put on their caps the white eagle"<sup>450</sup>. Sofía Casanova, in an article published in mid-February but written on January 24, also described the arrival of Paderewski along with British army officers and referred to the moment in which a German officer in the train station told them that, according to German government orders, they couldn't stay in Poznań and had to travel further to Poland, but Paderewski and the British rejected this order despite the threat by the German officer to raise the issue to the German government<sup>451</sup>. Casanova added that

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<sup>449</sup> "La historia de la revolución alemana XX", 'ABC', 29.01.1919, p. 6. Original quoted text: "tienen ametralladoras, cañones, automóviles acorazados y cañones que el ejército de ocupación en Rusia, al volver, desmoralizado, por las propagandas de Ebert y Scheidemann, al servicio del judaísmo, les vendiera por unos cuantos marcos".

<sup>450</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "Queda interrumpida toda comunicación ferroviaria y telefónica entre la provincia de Posen y el resto de Alemania. Los delegados que envía el gobierno provisional de Ebert son detenidos en la frontera establecida por los soldados polaco-alemanes, que en lugar de las escarapelas del Imperio, han puesto en sus gorras el águila blanca".

<sup>451</sup> "ABC en Polonia", 'ABC', 15.02.1919, p. 5.

shooting followed the acclamation of Paderewski and that “[...]with great sacrifices Poles took possession of the cities usurped by Germany 140 years ago”<sup>452</sup>.

Polish historian Ryszard Kaczmarek also mentions there was a shooting between Poles and German soldiers on December 27 on the Bazar Hotel, where Paderewski was staying<sup>453</sup> and Roszkowski claims the German units not only took the Polish and allied flags but also “attacked the Polish population”<sup>454</sup>. Marian Olszewski claims there was a shooting in Poznań on December 27 in the evening but does not clearly state which side started the shots<sup>455</sup>. Kaczmarek also writes that Paderewski was not allowed to stay in Greater Poland, without giving further details<sup>456</sup>. Earlier, on January 2, 1919, another Spanish newspaper, pro-Entente ‘La Correspondencia de España’ reported that fights took place between Poles and Germans in “Posen, capital of the Poznań region or Prussian Poland”, and then quoted a news report from the ‘Berliner Mittag Zeitung’. In the quoted text, the German newspaper described the celebration atmosphere in the city after Paderewski’s arrival to welcome him and explained that the street fights between local Poles and German soldiers started when German soldiers removed French, British and US flags that Poles had placed in the city. In addition, Pro-Western allies conservative newspaper ‘La Correspondencia de España’ claimed that Poles in the Greater Poland region would soon receive help from the Western Allies<sup>457</sup>. Kaczmarek explains that the uprising started when the German regular troops withdrew the Polish and allied flags and there was a shooting on the hotel where Paderewski stayed that made the People’s Guard, Straż Ludowa (dependent on the NRL) take part against the Germans<sup>458</sup>. Meanwhile, Janusz Pajewski states that “patriotic demonstrations in Poznań in the day of Paderewski’s arrival speeded up the outburst of Greater Poland’s uprising”<sup>459</sup> from what we can interpret Pajewski believed the uprising would have taken place anyway but later. These aforementioned Spanish press articles apparently did not refer in any case to previous Polish preparations of an uprising in the region, but Sofía Casanova did. On an article published on February 15, 1919 she referred

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<sup>452</sup> *Ibidem*, Original quoted text: “[...]con enormes sacrificios los polacos tomaron posesión de las ciudades usurpadas por Alemania hace ciento cuarenta años”.

<sup>453</sup> W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004*, Warszawa 2004, p.21; R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>454</sup> W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004*, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>455</sup> M. Olszewski, *Powstanie Wielkopolskie 1918-1919*, Poznań 1988, p. 7.

<sup>456</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>457</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 2.01.1919, p. 1.

<sup>458</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>459</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918*, *op. cit.*, p. 325. Original quoted text: „manifestacje patriotyczne w Poznaniu w dniu przybycia tam Paderewskiego przyspieszyły wybuch Powstania Wielkopolskiego”.

to the events in Poznań as the “disarming and expulsion of German garrisons by Polish soldiers and civils perfectly organized”<sup>460</sup>. This “perfectly organized” wording used by Casanova indicates that she was aware the uprising was not the result of improvisation, due to emotions of a particular moment, but a planned event. As Polish historians Czubiński and Grot state “[...]Polish military preparations for the uprising in Greater Poland lasted for many years”<sup>461</sup>. These authors also explain that “the Greater Poland Uprising was a massive uprising of the people of Greater Poland against the Prussian oppressor. It was partially organized, but for the most part it developed spontaneously” and added that workers, farmers, artisans and part of the bourgeoisie were part of the uprisers, but the leadership of the uprising was over time more and more conducted by “a small political group led by the NRL *Komisariat*”<sup>462</sup>. Olszewski doesn’t explicitly mention plans for an uprising in 1918, but claims that different military and workers’ groups were created in the region since November 1918 in the context of the chaos brought by the German revolution and adds that “by mid-December the outburst of a conflict hanged in the air”<sup>463</sup>. He also explains that once the uprising started, the military actions conducted by “the popular masses” were not led by NRL *Komisariat*, who was against the uprising. The author also assures that “the uprising movements lacked a unified strategic thought, a central command staff and an operational plan”<sup>464</sup>. Kaczmarek, meanwhile, argues that the armed conflict started “as the result of a sharpening of the political situation after the meetings of the ‘Sejm Dzielnicowy’ [Polish regional parliament] ended”, which consisted in the Polish government setting an ultimatum and breaking diplomatic relations with Germany, because in Greater Poland the German government created volunteer divisions to join the *Heimatschutz* as a reaction to the messages about the region conveyed by the NRL from Warsaw<sup>465</sup>.

Different perspectives on the belonging of the disputed region are seen across the examined Spanish press sources, even within the same newspaper. The main difference seen in the way Bueno and Casanova, as correspondents, reported about the Greater Poland Uprising on the same newspaper, ‘ABC’, is the following: whereas Casanova saw Greater Poland as an inherent part of Poland, Bueno saw the Poznań region as a natural part of Germany with a great

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<sup>460</sup> “ABC en Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 15.02.1919, p. 5.

<sup>461</sup> A. Czubiński; Z. Grot, *Powstanie Wielkopolskie 1918-1919*, Poznań 2006, p. 67. Original quoted text in Polish: „[...] polskie przygotowania militarne do powstania w Wielkopolsce trwały wiele lat”.

<sup>462</sup> *Ibidem*, p.89. Original quoted texts: „Powstanie Wielkopolskie było masowym zrywem ludu wielkopolskiego przeciw ciemnicy pruskiemu. Miało charakter częściowo zorganizowany, w znacznej jednak części rozwijało się spontanicznie”; „[...]w ręce malej grupy politycznej z Komisariatem NRL na czele”.

<sup>463</sup> M. Olszewski, *Powstanie Wielkopolskie 1918-1919, op. cit.*, p. 5-6.

<sup>464</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 7.

<sup>465</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989, op. cit.*, p. 94.



significance for the German state which, in his view, Germany should protect and defend from Polish aggression. However, he was opposed to a German military action against Polish uprisers and he interpreted that the Entente already decided to assign the disputed region to Poland.

It is also important to clarify that Spanish press reports on the uprising didn't start after December 27, once the uprising had already begun. In fact, already on December 3, 1918 Javier Bueno *via* radiogram reported that: "the province and the city of Poznań are in the hands of Poles, and there is the risk that the enormous amounts of cereals and potatoes that there are over there stored might not be available to be used for its delivery among all the other provinces that aren't rich in agriculture"<sup>466</sup>. Almost two months later, on January 29, 1919 Bueno criticised German leaders Ebert and Scheidemann for doing nothing against Polish actions in Greater Poland. He stated that in the peace conference the region would be "annexed" by Poland on the basis of "the Wilsonian principle of nationalities". The correspondent highlighted that the Poznań region was the richest from an agriculture-based point of view in the whole Germany and gave a figure that supported such a statement: "two fifths of the cereal and potatoes harvest [in Germany] are produced in the Poznań province". Bueno concluded his reference to the Poznań question stating that "no more potatoes and cereals will come from Poznań", adding this would generate even more misery in Germany and insisting on the idea that Ebert did nothing to prevent this from happening<sup>467</sup>.

It is surprising to read in Bueno's December 3 article that by then Poles already controlled Poznań. Why did Bueno write so? It is likely connected to the fact that from December 3 until December 5 the so-called Sejm Dzielnicowy (regional Parliament) gathered in Poznań and created the NRL (Supreme People's Council), which according to Kisielewski was "a kind of government in the former German partition"<sup>468</sup>. However, Roszkowski argues that this 'Sejm Dzielnicowy' decided to wait for the Paris Peace Conference to know and confirm the political future of the region<sup>469</sup>. Still in relation to the origins of the NRL, as Kisielewski explains, the so-called CKO (Central Citizens' Committee), established in the summer of 1918 in Poznań, organized the creation of the Sejm Dzielnicowy, which led to the creation of the People's Supreme Council, NRL<sup>470</sup>. However, German historian Böhler claims

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<sup>466</sup> "El quebranto de la disciplina alemana, radiograma de ABC", 'ABC', 3.12.1918, p. 19, Original quoted text: "la provincia y la ciudad de Posen están en manos de los polacos, y hay el peligro de que las enormes cantidades de cereales y patatas que hay allí almacenadas se pierdan para el reparto entre todas las otras provincias que no son ricas en agricultura".

<sup>467</sup> "La historia de la revolución alemana XX", 'ABC', 29.01.1919, p. 6.

<sup>468</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>469</sup> W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004*, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>470</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

that, already in 1916, CKO, a secret organization, operated as “a representation of Poles living in this area”<sup>471</sup>. In addition, Kisielewski explains that POW (Polska Organizacja Wojskowa – Polish Military Organization) above all, and, into a lesser extent, the people’s guard, dependant on the People’s Supreme Council (NRL), were behind the outburst of the uprising after “the unfavourable reaction by Germans” to demonstrations to celebrate the arrival of Paderewski in Poznań<sup>472</sup>. However, as Kaczmarek<sup>473</sup> and the very Kisielewski<sup>474</sup> explain, the NRL opposed the launch of an uprising against the German administration, and preferred to wait until the resolution over the future of the region of the Peace Treaty that would result from the Paris Peace Conference. In relation to this, Böhler mentions the rivalry between NRL and POW and also states that Polish nationalists, in what can be interpreted as a reference to Endecja and the NRL, preferred to add Greater Poland to the new Polish state without an armed conflict<sup>475</sup>. Kaczmarek claims that “immediately from the beginning of the uprising the conflict between NRL and POW revealed itself”<sup>476</sup>.

In regard to the inevitability or evitability of a German-Polish confrontation in Greater Poland, it must be highlighted first, that on December 13, 1918 ‘ABC’'s Sofía Casanova claimed that the borders of the new Polish state depended on “the territorial configuration of Germany” and also that if Poznań, both Silesias and Danzig were given to Poland, this would “hurt Germany’s heart”<sup>477</sup>. We can interpret that Casanova, like Javier Bueno, was well aware of the importance for the German state of the Poznań region. So, we can claim a conflict over the disputed territories, not necessarily armed, between Germany and Poland was unavoidable. A similar idea is presented by Kaczmarek, who claims that at the moment when the Sejm Dzielnicowy meetings were over, “it was then already clear that it would be difficult in a moment when a nationality conflict tightened up to find a compromised solution that would satisfy both Poles and Germans”<sup>478</sup>.

When it comes to the strategy of the Warsaw Polish government in relation to the Greater Poland question, it must be explained that on December 26, 1918 ‘ABC’'s Javier Bueno

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<sup>471</sup> J. Böhler, *Wojna Domowa. Nowe Spojrzenie na Odrodzenie Polski*, p. 141. Original quoted words in Polish: „przedstawicielstwo Polaków mieszkających na tym obszarze”.

<sup>472</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, p. 205.

<sup>473</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski-1914-1989, op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>474</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, p. 205.

<sup>475</sup> J. Böhler, *Wojna Domowa, Nowe Spojrzenie na Odrodzenie Polski, op. cit.*, p. 142.

<sup>476</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski-1914-1989, op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>477</sup> “ABC en Rusia. El resurgir de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 13.12.1918, p. 26.

<sup>478</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989, op. cit.*, p. 94.

reported *via* radio telegram that Poland would declare the war to Germany while invading the Poznań region and Silesia and added: “The Warsaw government is trying to make that the peace conference that must gather in Versailles, finds itself before a *fait accompli*: the invasion of both provinces, invoking the principle of nationalities, one of Wilson’s 14 points”. The Spanish journalist placed on the Warsaw government the goal of setting *fait accompli* in the Poznań region<sup>479</sup>, but one should wonder if Warsaw’s Polish government was in fact behind the launch of the uprising in Greater Poland. According to Ryszard Kaczmarek, Moraczewski’s government in Warsaw supported “uprising moods in Greater Poland” and the author justifies this statement by pointing to Moraczewski’s exposé on November 20, in which the Polish prime minister, himself originally from the disputed region, expressed his wish to integrate Greater Poland to the new state in a “fast” way<sup>480</sup>. These words do not necessarily mean the Warsaw government was completely the organizer of the uprising with the intention to create *fait accompli*, as ‘ABC’ ’s correspondent argued. In addition, Casanova claimed that there were indications that the Entente communicated to Poland that “it must conquer the disputed territories of its historical borders” and she also stated that Poland, following Entente’s orders, already took control over “Danzig, Posen and important railway lines”<sup>481</sup>. This would match the *fait accompli* strategy presented by Bueno, although in Casanova’s case, she claimed that the Entente encouraged Poland to follow such a strategy, and it wasn’t a strategy that Poland’s government and the head of state decided on their own. In fact, Czubiński and Grot argue that in late 1918, because of French-British rivalry and their differences regarding the role of Germany in Europe, wanting England a relatively strong Germany and the French an even weaker one, “in the context of this rivalry the French started without noise to try convincing Poles to make attempts to create *fait accompli* in the eastern Border of the Reich”<sup>482</sup>.

So, was the Greater Poland Uprising in its planning and at the beginning of its execution mostly an operation of the Polish socialists and Piłsudski-associated POW? Certainly not, although it is true that it wasn’t until January 8 when the NRL *Komisariat* joined the uprisers<sup>483</sup>.

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<sup>479</sup> “Consecuencias de la destrucción del ejército alemán. Radiograma de ABC”, ‘ABC’, 26.12.1918, p. 7. Original quoted text: “El gobierno de Varsovia trata de que la Conferencia de la paz que debe reunirse en Versalles se encuentre ante un hecho consumado: la invasión de ambas provincias, invocando el principio de las nacionalidades uno de los 14 puntos de Wilson”.

<sup>480</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>481</sup> “ABC en Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 15.02.1919, p. 5. Original quoted words: „tienen que conquistar los disputados territorios de sus fronteras históricas”.

<sup>482</sup> A. Czubiński; Z. Grot, *Powstanie Wielkopolskie 1918-1919*, *op. cit.*, p.61. Original quoted text: „Na tle tej rywalizacji Francuzi zaczęli po cichu namawiać Polaków do podjęcia prób stworzenia faktów dokonanych na wschodniej granicy Rzeszy”.

<sup>483</sup> M. Olszewski, *Powstanie Wielkopolskie 1918-1919*, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

However, as Czubiński and Grot explain, Endecja-related politicians ruled in the NRL *Komisariat*, which politically “directed” the uprising, while in the Warsaw government Piłsudski-related politicians had the most influence. These authors add that *a posteriori* throughout the interwar period the Piłsudski political side tried to diminish the role of the NRL *Komisariat* and increase the small role of the POW in the Greater Poland Uprising, at the same time diminishing the role of Poznań uprisers and increasing the role of southern Greater Poland POW uprisers<sup>484</sup>. Czubiński and Grot also argue that “both the Supreme People’s Council [NRL] and the uprisers eyed for the liberation not only of Poznań but also of other lands of German Poland. But the ways they used were different”<sup>485</sup>.

In addition, regarding Bueno’s article, it is a must clarifying the are no references in the consulted literature to the Polish government considering to declare war on Germany as Bueno claimed. It is also worth highlighting that in this case Bueno used the term “invasion”. In fact, it is difficult to call the Greater Poland Uprising an invasion if we take into account the power was taken by those who already lived in the region. Bueno added this “project” was easily attainable because Polish troops “will not find any resistance on their advance” since no German army would be created on purpose to fight them and the creation of volunteer militias was not a solution for Germany’s defence<sup>486</sup>. It is worth highlighting that when he wrote that Polish troops wouldn’t find any opposition he was wrong and he was also wrong when he stated that Poland would declare war to Germany, at least considering that no reference to such intention of war declaration is found in the revised literature on the Greater Poland Uprising.

In addition, the Spanish correspondent accused German revolutionaries of the situation, which he described as a “disgrace”. He added: “[...]the occupation of Silesia and Posen by Polish troops would be more than an affront for the German nation, also an enormous diminishment of its economic forces because Silesia is rich in mines and agriculture, and the Posen province is the German Castilla”<sup>487</sup>. The comparison with Spain’s Castilla region was due to the agriculture wealthiness of the Spanish region. It is worth remarking that the Spanish correspondent mentioned the possibility of a Polish occupation of Posen, being the word occupation worth commenting. He added that, for Germany, losing these two regions would

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<sup>484</sup> A. Czubiński, A.; Z. Grot, *Powstanie Wielkopolskie 1918-1919*, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>485</sup> *Ibidem*, p.88, „zarówno Naczelną Radę Ludową, jak i powstańcy, mieli na oku wyzwolenie nie tylko Poznańskiego, lecz także innych ziem zaboru pruskiego. Tylko drogi, którymi kroczone, były odmienne”.

<sup>486</sup> “Consecuencias de la destrucción del ejército alemán”, ‘ABC’, 26.12.1918, p. 7.

<sup>487</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “[...]la ocupación de Silesia y de Posen por tropas polacas sería también una enorme disminución de sus fuerzas económicas porque la Silesia es rica en minas y en agricultura, y la provincia de Posen es la Castilla alemana”.

mean losing many “food resources”, wealthiness and industrial potential. He also stated that Poland “dared to invade Silesia and the Poznań region” because of the German soldier council system’s inefficiency<sup>488</sup>.

On December 31, 1918, ‘ABC’ claimed that in the Poznań region the situation was “serious” because Poles were fighting with German soldiers “without the authorities having been able to prevent this from happening”. In addition, the newspaper stated that, according to an information from the German Nauen radiostation, in Poznań “Polish legionists committed robberies and shot prisoners”<sup>489</sup>. On January 2, 1919, ‘ABC’ also reported the events in Poznań in a way that could generate a negative view of Poles in the city: “the events in Posen were extraordinarily serious. Polish troops disarmed a German grenadier regiment, robbed and assaulted shops, shot suspected resisters, and dominated the streets with their patrols”<sup>490</sup>. German historian Jochen Böhler explains that not only soldiers were on both sides of the clashes between Germans and Poles and the paramilitary organizations taking part in the fights were accompanied by “groups of criminals and smugglers, who took advantage of this’ time of glory’ to conduct their dark businesses at the shadow of the political conflict”<sup>491</sup>. On the same day as ‘ABC’ did it, ‘La Correspondencia de España’ also reported on what Poles did in Poznań, without such a negative light as in ‘ABC’, but mostly relying on a telegraphic press note and adding very little own text<sup>492</sup>.

As it has been stated, the figure of Paderewski was linked to the Greater Poland Uprising on many press articles, but this was not only done in relation to his arrival in Poznań. For instance, on January 2, 1919 ‘El Liberal’ published a telegraphic press note from London, and headlined it “The pianist Paderewski, a general?”. On the note it was reported that in the Poznań region “the famous pianist” Paderewski was the commander of the Polish troops fighting against the Germans. The Spanish newspaper commented the press note, wondered if that information was true and claimed that in case it was true, “we wish from the bottom of our hearts that his military marches are as brilliant in the battlefield as those which on the piano

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<sup>488</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>489</sup> “El nuevo gobierno nacional alemán”, ‘ABC’, 31.12.1918, p.7. Original quoted words : “sin que las autoridades lograsen impedirlo”; “Los legionarios de Polonia cometieron robos y fusilaron prisioneros”

<sup>490</sup> “Poincaré asegura que los aliados irán de completo acuerdo a la conferencia de la paz”, ‘ABC’, 2.01.1919, p. 9. Original quoted text: “Los sucesos de Posen fueron de extraordinaria gravedad. Las tropas polacas desarmaron a un regimiento de granaderos alemán, robaron y asaltaron las tiendas, fusilaron a los sospechosos de haber hecho resistencia y dominan las calles con sus patrullas”.

<sup>491</sup> J. Böhler, *Wojna Domowa. Nowe spojrzenie na odrodzenie Polski*, op. cit., p. 147. Original quoted words: „[...] bandy przestępców i przemytników, którzy na ten „czas chwały” wykorzystali do prowadzenia swoich ciemnych interesów w cieniu konfliktu politycznego”.

<sup>492</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 2.01.1919, p. 1.

delighted so much Madrid's audience"<sup>493</sup>. The original information was certainly false but one can interpret from their reaction, that the newspaper's editors, although not completely convinced about its veracity took it seriously.

When it comes to the military evolution of the uprising, on January 4, 1919, 'ABC' reported, using the London press as its source, that Poles in the Paris Peace Conference requested being given Poznań, Upper Silesia and Dantzig and that the Polish legions gained new territories in an "alarming" way, and Poles took "Ostrovo" ('ABC' referred to the town of Ostrów Wielkopolski)<sup>494</sup>. Kaczmarek explains that Ostrów was taken by Polish uprisers on December 31<sup>495</sup> and in relation to this Czubiński explains that "by January 5 the uprisers took south-west and central Greater Poland, without a significant resistance from the German side"<sup>496</sup>. On January 4, 1919, 'ABC's Javier Bueno explained that local Poles in Poznań "dissolved the *soldatenrat*" and criticised both the fact that the German soldiers did not try to defend the cereal and potatoes deposits and the *soldatenrat's* attitude in Warsaw<sup>497</sup>. Olszewski explains that very soon after the start of the uprising, Poles "arrested the Prussian military and civil authorities"<sup>498</sup>, what corresponds to the *soldatenrat's* dissolution which 'ABC's Javier Bueno mentioned in his January 4 article. In addition, it is with noting that Czubiński explains that the citadel in Poznań was taken by Poles without the need to use force. On January 19, 1919 *via* radiotelegram Bueno reported that German militarism was unable to retain many German cities and to prevent Poles from keeping taking control of Poznań region (and also Upper Silesia)<sup>499</sup>.

A series of concepts regarding the military, political or juridical status of the Greater Poland region after the uprising started are seen in the Spanish press. On January 29, 1919 'ABC's Bueno reported that Poznań's province was under Polish control. Unlike 'ABC's correspondent, instead of using the wording Polish control, on January 17, 1919 pro-allied newspaper 'La Correspondencia de España' claimed that "Germans don't forgive Poles for the invasion of Poznań region" and the newspaper reminded its readers Posnania (Poznań region)

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<sup>493</sup> "Polacos y alemanes. ¿El panista Paderewski, general?" , 'El Liberal', 2.01.1919, p. 3. Original quoted text: "deseamos de todo corazón que sus marchas militares sean tan brillantes en el campo de batalla como las que en el piano entusiasmaron tanto al público madrileño".

<sup>494</sup> "En la conferencia de la paz, las naciones aliadas estarán clasificadas por categorías", ABC, 4.01.1919, p. 9.

<sup>495</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>496</sup> A. Czubiński; Z. Grot, *Powstanie Wielkopolskie 1918-1919*, *op. cit.*, p.70. Original quoted text: "Do 5 stycznia 1919 powstańcy zajęli południowo-zachodnia i środkowa Wielkopolskę, bez znaczącego oporu ze strony niemieckiej".

<sup>497</sup> "La historia de la revolución alemana X", 'ABC', 4.01.1919, p. 6

<sup>498</sup> M. Olszewski, *Powstanie Wielkopolski 1918-1919*, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>499</sup> "Berlin en pie de guerra. Radiograma de ABC", 'ABC', 19. 01.1919, p. 9.

was one of the three partitioned areas of Poland when the country was partitioned among Russia, Prussia and Austria. The usage of the word ‘invasion’ cannot be unattended. Was the uprising really an invasion? It is difficult to call it an invasion when taking into account, in addition to the fact that most population in Greater Poland was Polish, also the fact that it was not the new Polish government in Warsaw ruling the former Polish Kingdom the official or main initiator of the uprising, but it was started by paramilitary forces within the region. The newspaper also connected this idea of Poland’s recovery of Poznań region (Greater Poland, Wielkopolska in Polish) with the fact that one of Wilson’s 14 points, “accepted by Germany” was that Poland retook its historical lands, and those retaken lands had to include “a way out to the sea”, a way to the sea which Poles wanted to be Gdańsk, the newspaper added<sup>500</sup>. So, ‘La Correspondencia de España’ did not make a difference between Pomerania and Greater Poland when it comes to Polish lands in the Prussian partition. Bueno also claimed that the “disproportionate” Polish territorial ambitions for annexation were true and were not only a pretext used by Germans to claim the need to develop a German army. He added: “Poles demand the Poznań region, part of Silesia and part of Eastern Prussia, with the port of Danzig. And they do not limit themselves to ambition platonically, but by uniting action to desire, declared territories that belong to Prussia as annexed”<sup>501</sup>. He explained to his readers that Poland didn’t conduct an organized military operation in Greater Poland because no regular troops were involved, but, instead, there was a Polish annexation of the region by means of local Polish population in the area, who made an uprising “against the German administration and domination”. In addition, Bueno argued that Polish troops were not involved in the Greater Poland Uprising because Poland did not have a regular army yet and the forces resulting from former Polish legion under German command, 25000 men, were focused on fighting the Bolsheviks and pressuring on the territorial conflicts with Czechoslovakia, in Upper Silesia and in Eastern Galicia over Lemberg. He argued that it was not justified to organize an army led by Hindenburg to operate in Greater Poland against Poles because there was no “Polish military offensive”. He added “in order to dominate these Polish peasants and inhabitants, who declare cities and villages of the Poznań region as annexed to Poland, it would be enough with a regiment that would help local civil authorities”. According to Javier Bueno, attempting to

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<sup>500</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 17.01.1919, p. 1.

<sup>501</sup> “ABC en Alemania. La historia de la revolución XLVI”, ‘ABC’, 12.03.1919, p. 4. Original quoted text: “los polacos piden la Posnania, parte de la Silesia y parte de la Prusia oriental, con el puerto de Danzig. Y no se limitan a ambicionar platónicamente, sino que, uniendo la acción al deseo, declaran anexionados territorios que pertenecen a Prusia”.

demand its 1914 eastern border was “useless” for Germany because this was already settled and “even Wilson’s 14 points that Germany regards as its last hope, agree with the expansion of Poland towards the West”, so he thought Germany’s claims in Poznań rather intended to avoid “losing the right to the vindication, following France’s example in 1871”, in reference to the aftermath of French-Prussian war and the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine by the German Empire. He added that Poland didn’t have to fight in order to take territories from Prussia because the Entente would make sure Poland gets them, and added “if it depended only on the Warsaw government, then the vehemence of the Poles living in the Poznań region would calm down and be replaced by confident waiting for the decisions of the Versailles conference”. However, in Bueno’s view Poznań region Poles were “in a hurry to make Germans feel their vengeful hate and to humiliate them” and both the Polish government in Warsaw and the National Polish Committee (KNP) didn’t “calm down” but enhanced the attacks on Germans by Poznań Poles “for the sake of the national unity” the Polish government looked for, and “since they don’t have regular troops to protect the [local Poznań region’s] irredentists they ask the Entente to demand from Germany the suspension of retaliation and to signalize this line in line with the future borders”. He described Polish-German perceptions by means of a very hard language: “all the petty, but concentrated hostility of the Poles towards the German that made him ashamed of his filth, his carelessness, his incoherence, his laziness and his lack of temper comes out now impatient and insolent”. Bueno also argued that it would be easier for the Entente to please Poles with the demanded border in the Poznań region, because “what Poland asks for is part of the project to create a wall between Germany and Russia”, but it would be more difficult for the Entente to please Poland with a liked border in Cieszyn Silesia, concerning its conflict with Czechoslovakia, so the Entente preferred Poland and Czechoslovakia “to solve their disputes by war” in that case since this border conflict did not matter for the goal of separating Germany from Russia<sup>502</sup>.

It is also worth underlining that on March 8, 1919 Javier Bueno claimed that before the Entente would send food to Germany in the context of “the eve of new conditions for the

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<sup>502</sup> “ABC en Alemania. La historia de la revolución, XLVI”, ‘ABC’, 12.03.1919, p. 4-5. Original quoted texts: “Para dominar a estos campesinos y habitantes polacos que declaran anexionados a Polonia ciudades y pueblos de Posnania bastaría un regimiento que prestase ayuda a las autoridades civiles locales”; “ si por el gobierno de Varsovia fuera, la vehemencia de los polacos habitantes de Posnania se calmaría y sería reemplazada por la espera confiada en las decisiones de la Conferencia de Versailles”; “y como no disponen de tropas regulares que protejan a los irredentos, piden a la Entente que exija de Alemania la suspensión de represalias y que señale esa línea de acuerdo con las futuras fronteras”; “toda la mezquina, pero reconcentrada hostilidad del polaco hacia el alemán que le hizo avergonzarse de su suciedad, de su incuria, de su incoherencia, de su pereza y de su atrabiliarismo, sale ahora impaciente e insolente ”.



armistice extension”, it would demand from Germany, among others, “the evacuation from national territories in Poznań region so that these could be occupied by Poles”<sup>503</sup>. A telegraphic press note was headlined “Poles expel Germans from Poznań” by ‘El Sol’ on May 2, 1919<sup>504</sup>, what could give Spanish press readers the impression that the new Polish state forced Germans to leave their residences and lives in the Poznań area. However, were the Germans being expelled by Poles? On January 4, 1919, ‘ABC’ reported, using the London press as its source, that Poles in the Paris peace Conference requested being given Poznań, Upper Silesia and Gdańsk<sup>505</sup>.

The political relations between Greater Poland and the new Warsaw-based Polish state, echoed in the Spanish press, is another of the topics that should be analysed in this section of the thesis. On January 16, 1919 ‘ABC’ reported that “The Polish Council in Posen has agreed the incorporation of this province to Poland”<sup>506</sup>. One should understand that by “the Polish Council in Posen” the newspaper’s editors referred to NRL, Naczelna Rada Ludowa (Supreme People’s Council). As a matter of fact, as Kisielewski explains, not until May 25, 1919 the NRL did place itself under the power of Warsaw’s government and Piłsudski’s army, and not until August 1, 1919 was this incorporation approved by the Sejm, even though the region had already been included in the Versailles Treaty as part of the new Polish State in June 1919. In the literature sources nothing has been found in line with what ‘ABC’ mentions happening around January 16 or earlier. However, as Pajewski explains, on January 3, 1919 the Poznań NRL made a proposal to create a whole Polish Supreme Nation’s Council with politicians from the three parts of Poland that would hold the power instead of the provisional Head of State Piłsudski, but this proposal was refused by Piłsudski and the socialists<sup>507</sup>. The Spanish newspaper might have interpreted this proposal as a project to incorporate Greater Poland to the new state. Earlier, on January 8, the NRL had taken the control of the area of Greater Poland from the Germans<sup>508</sup> from what we can interpret that thanks to the Greater Poland Uprising, the NRL had a much stronger position towards the other Polish government institutions. Olszewski only refers to January 16 in relation with the armistice but does not give any information regarding an alleged decision by NRL for incorporation around January 16<sup>509</sup>. On the same

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<sup>503</sup> “ABC en Alemania. La historia de la revolución, XLIV”, ‘ABC’, 8.03.1919, p. 5.

<sup>504</sup> “Los polacos expulsan a los alemanes de Posnanía”, ‘El Sol’, 2.05.1919, p.6.

<sup>505</sup> “En la conferencia de la paz, las naciones aliadas estarán clasificadas por categorías”, ‘ABC’, 4.01.1919, p. 9.

<sup>506</sup> “Resumen de informaciones y noticias”, ‘ABC’, 16.01.1919, p. 10.

<sup>507</sup> J. Pajewski, *Odbudowa Państwa Polskiego 1914-1918*, op. cit., p. 326.

<sup>508</sup> W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004*, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>509</sup> M. Olszewski, *Powstanie Wielkopolskie 1918-1919*, op. cit., p. 9.

date, when “ABC” referred to the NRL’s decision on the incorporation of Greater Poland into the new Polish state, on January 16, an armistice with the NRL was signed by the German armies under the pressure of marshal Foch, who used it as a requirement demanded to Germans to avoid breaking the November armistice<sup>510</sup>. It is worth highlighting that among the examined Spanish press sources there are no references to Ferdinand Foch’s intervention to reach an armistice between Germany and the NRL (Greater Poland’s Supreme People’s Council).

Onto another matter, within the Greater Poland question, it is also worth mentioning ABC’s correspondent in Berlin Javier Bueno, in an article written in February but published on March 12, 1919, stated that a proof of Germany not seeing Poland as an enemy was that:

“it [Germany] is willing to accept the Entente’s demand that the two Polish divisions organized in France disembark in Dantzig and go through Eastern Prussia. This means, Germany would give free pass through its territory to troops which later were supposed to enlarge the enemy forces”<sup>511</sup>.

Precisely, on December 11, 1918 ‘ABC’ had reported that Poles planned to “disembark 70000 men in Dantzig to occupy the Prussian Poznań region and establish their headquarters in Posen”, what worsened Germany’s troubled situation<sup>512</sup>. Both texts referred to Haller’s divisions formed in France as the Polish Blue army. Eventually Haller’s troops didn’t disembark in Gdańsk but crossed Germany by train and these troops didn’t have an impact in the Polish takeover of most of Greater Poland. Indeed, Bueno was wrong and the Germans didn’t want Haller’s troops to enter in Poland through Gdańsk. As agreed between Foch and Erzberger on April 4, 1919 Haller’s troops entered Poland by train through Kalisz, Stępiak explains<sup>513</sup>. So, ‘ABC’’s reported disembark did never occur. In addition it is worth highlighting ‘ABC’ referred to 70.000 men but Haller’s troops in fact accounted for 90.000 men<sup>514</sup>. Stępiak also writes that Paderewski, in a meeting with local Poles in Gdańsk on December 24, claimed: “the return of

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<sup>510</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, op. cit., p. 205-206.

<sup>511</sup> “ABC en Alemania. La historia de la revolución XLVI”, ‘ABC’, 12.03.1919,p. 4., Original quoted text: “[Alemania] se muestra dispuesta a acceder a la exigencia de la Entente de que las dos divisiones polacas organizadas en Francia desembarquen en Danzig y pasen por Prusia Oriental? Es decir, ¿Alemania daría paso libre por sus territorios a tropas que luego habían de engrosar las fuerzas enemigas”.

<sup>512</sup> “Continúa muy inquietante en Alemania la agitación política”, ‘ABC’, 11.12.1918, p. 7. Original quoted text: “se disponen a desembarcar 70.000 hombres en Danztig para ocupar la Posnania prusiana, estableciendo su Cuartel general en Pozen”.

<sup>513</sup> H. Stępiak, *Polska i Wolne Miasto Gdańsk (1920-1939)*, op. cit., p. 70.

<sup>514</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 68.

the Polish divisions under the direction of general Haller from France to the country will make the city and all Western Prussia Polish” and adds that this sentence was used by the German government in Spa to oppose such entrance of Haller’s troops to Poland through Gdansk<sup>515</sup>. It is important to highlight that Bueno was right when connecting Haller’s troops arrival plan with Greater Poland, but he was wrong when claiming these would occupy Greater Poland and establish its headquarters in Poznań. This was not exactly the plan, because as Czubiński explains, for the last weeks of 1918 and separately from Piłsudski, Dmowski’s Polish National Committee (KNP) started planning Haller’s troops return to Poland, through Gdańsk on December 19 and initially taking control of the Gdańsk-Toruń railway, an action that had to support the 26 December uprising in German Poland, namely Greater Poland, Pomerania and Silesia, requiring “synchronization” between the uprisers, Polish National Committee’s orders and Haller’s troops<sup>516</sup>. However, according to this plan, Greater Poland uprisers would be in control of the region, and this would not be, as Bueno had predicted, under Haller’s troops. As Czubiński explains, England opposed any plan to bring Haller’s troops back to Poland and opposed any option of Poland taking all the Polish lands within Germany. The Brits, instead, initiated the project to bring Paderewski back to Poland<sup>517</sup>. In addition, Czubiński claims that “the uprising exploded prematurely and in these conditions it was in a situation only to take Greater Poland” and not Pomerania and Upper Silesia<sup>518</sup>.

Last but not least, it is worth highlighting that a few days before the Treaty of Versailles was signed, on June 19, 1919, ‘ABC’’s correspondent in Berlin Javier Bueno, when analysing current Germany’s “geostrategic situation” stated that Germany’s eastern neighbour, Poland, which at the time had 12 million inhabitants, would have 24 million after taking Poznań region, [Western] Galicia and part of Ukraine [Eastern Galicia]<sup>519</sup>. He was thus convinced that Greater Poland, already *de facto* part of Poland, would be officially given to Poland by the Allies in the Paris Peace Treaty.

## Conclusions

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<sup>515</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 14. Original quoted text: „powrót polskich dywizji pod dowództwem gen. J.Hallera z Francji do kraju przez Gdańsk uczyni to miasto i całe Prusy Zachodnie polskim”.

<sup>516</sup> A. Czubiński; Z. Grot, *Powstanie Wielkopolskie 1918-1919*, *op. cit.*, p. 62-63.

<sup>517</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 64-65.

<sup>518</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 67. Original quoted text: „Powstanie wybuchło przedwcześnie i w tych warunkach mogło objąć tylko Wielkopolskę”.

<sup>519</sup> “ABC en Alemania. La paz de la muerte”, ‘ABC’, 19.06.1919, p. 3.

It can be concluded that most Spanish press contributors treating the Greater Poland question, on the one hand, focused on both the relations between the Warsaw government and the uprising leaders, and the Polish strategies to take control of the region. In addition, Spanish columnists were convinced that the Peace Conference would officially leave the region in Polish hands.

The Greater Poland question was seen by Spain's press commentators as an issue strictly linked to the ongoing political processes in Germany after the war defeat and during revolution, so, in a way, they saw it as a German question rather than exclusively as a purely Polish question.

The armed conflict in Greater Poland was not seen by Spanish press editors and contributors as an improvised local patriotic effort but rather as an organized military action with a clear strategy and goals to ensure the region was *de facto* controlled by Poland before a decision was made about its fate in the Paris Peace Conference. This is also why both Casanova and Bueno believed a policy of accomplished facts was performed by Poland in the region, but Bueno's reports on Poland's attitudes, as well the attitudes of Polish citizens in the disputed region seem very exaggerated and catastrophist. In addition, 'ABC' was very concerned about the safety and stability in the disputed region and in Germany overall, as a result of the German-Polish clashes.

### Spain and the Polish-Czech conflict over Cieszyn Silesia: 1918-1920

On the still unsettled, pre-Versailles Treaty western border of the reborn Polish state, when the Greater Poland Uprising had not yet concluded, a new conflict arose in the Western border, that later on would coincide in time with the Polish-Soviet War, the Upper Silesian conflict, the plebiscite in Warmia, Masuria and Powiśle (East Prussia) and the creation of the Danzig Free City. These other conflicts, especially the Polish-Soviet War, would certainly have an impact on the Cieszyn Silesia conflict's evolution. The Polish-Czech conflict was generated after the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of the Great War, when in the Silesian part of the Habsburg Empire, the so-called Cieszyn Silesia, both Czech and Poles, who cohabited with Germans here, aimed at owning the region's sovereignty. The disputed region's population was predominantly Polish, but historically Cieszyn Silesia had been linked to Bohemia. On October 19, 1918 the Polish National Council of the Cieszyn Duchy was formed, even before Austro-Hungarian dissolution was a complete reality, and the territory ruled by the

Council became in November one of the parts of the new independent Polish state. In addition, on November 5, 1918 a provisional agreement was reached between this new Polish local government institution and its Czech counterpart (the Czech National Council for Silesia created on October 30) to divide the region according to ethnographic criteria, what was more beneficial for Poland than the Czechs territory-wise (77% of the region) but left most mining areas and important railway communication under Czech control. However, the fact that on November 29, 1918 Piłsudski announced the elections for the Legislative Sejm to be celebrated on January 26, 1919, which would also take place in the whole Cieszyn Silesia area, inflated previous disagreements, and due to a Czech military reaction in form of an aggression, the situation escalated into an armed conflict that lasted for a week in late January 1919<sup>520</sup>.

The impacts of the conflict in the Spanish diplomacy were limited as we can infer from the fact there was not much correspondence on the question. A significant impact of this territorial dispute in Spanish diplomatic correspondence is not seen until the advanced phase of the Polish-Czechoslovakian conflict. However, the reports by Spain's plenipotentiary minister Gutiérrez de Agüera<sup>521</sup> on this question are extensive, very detailed and deeply thought. Since diplomatic relations between Poland and Spain started in May 1919, there are no diplomatic reports from Warsaw reporting to Spain's state minister about the beginning of the conflict over Cieszyn Silesia, especially of its armed period in late January 1919. Likewise, diplomatic relations between Spain and the new Czechoslovakian state started on June 9, 1919<sup>522</sup>.

In his paper *La cuestión checo-polaca de Teschen: breve perspectiva histórica y actual (The Czech-Polish Teschen question: a brief historical and current perspective)*, University of Granada's researcher Manuel Chacón Rodríguez analysed the Cieszyn conflict, generally speaking, without a Spanish (institutional, diplomatic or press-related) perspective, and not only addressing the period researched here, but also looking at the whole interwar period and going beyond historiography, by researching the ongoing effects of the conflict in the region and in contemporary Polish-Czechoslovakian relations<sup>523</sup>. In fact, this author claims that the effects

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<sup>520</sup> See: *Dzieje Śląska Cieszyńskiego od zarania do czasów współczesnych. Tom VI: Śląsk Cieszyński w latach 1918-1945*, red. K. Nowak. p. 15-38; See also (much less detailed): R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski, op. cit.*, p.107, Kisielewski, T., *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski, op. cit.* p.261, Roszkowski, *Historia Polski, op. cit.*, p.21.

<sup>521</sup> 1867-1931. Spain's Plenipotentiary Minister in Warsaw, officially from November 13, 1919 (started functioning as such on February 10, 1920) to June 14, 1926.

<sup>522</sup> L. Montilla Amador, *Las relaciones entre España y Checoslovaquia en la etapa de Entreguerras*, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Madrid 2020. N.B. This work mentions but does not analyse the Polish-Czechoslovakian Cieszyn Silesia conflict.

<sup>523</sup> M. Chacón Rodríguez, *La cuestión checo-polaca de Teschen: breve perspectiva histórica y actual*, "Cuadernos constitucionales de la Cátedra Fadrique Furió Ceriol", N° 45-46, 2004, p. 181-198; p. 181.

of the 1918-1920 dispute: “[...] have lasted in the minds of Poles and Czechs until our days and [the conflict] has remained for posterity as a serious precedent among both nations, [being] a national grievance that has deepened the sometimes mutual misunderstanding and prejudice between these two neighbouring and brother countries”<sup>524</sup>. Chacón also emphasises the fact this conflict took place precisely when both nations liberated from the Empires’ oppression made it more damaging for relations between both countries<sup>525</sup>.

In order to fully understand Spain’s institutional and diplomatic attitude towards the Cieszyn Silesia conflict, it is important to look at similarities and differences in the way Poland and Czechoslovakia were treated and regarded by Spain. On June 24, 1919 the Spanish King Alfonso XIII read a speech given to him by the Ministers Council President on the official inauguration of the Spanish courts in the Senate, and on this speech he mentioned that Spain had officially recognised Finland “as well as the Republic of Poland and the Czechoslovakian one” as states<sup>526</sup>. Both neighbouring new states were mentioned together in the King’s speech, although Poland just before its southwestern neighbour.

On the very same day the Versailles Treaty was signed, Spain’s State Minister Manuel Gonzalez Hontoria sent a telegram to Spain’s ambassador in Paris Quiñones de León asking him to congratulate on behalf of Spain’s king and government the Polish and Czech-Slovak representatives in the peace conference for the peace treaty with Germany and asked him to communicate “the wishes made by Spain for the wellness and prosperity of their respective countries as independent nations”<sup>527</sup>. The fact the minister sent a communication request addressed to both states on the same telegram might be interpreted as an equal diplomatic significance of both new states for Spain on that moment. As Montilla Amador explains in his doctoral thesis, Spain’s State Ministry sent José Maria de Santos Cia as its first diplomatic envoy to the legation in the new Czechoslovakian state in Prague as “a second-class secretary” (*Chargés d'affaires ad interim*)<sup>528</sup> whereas Spain sent as its first diplomatic envoy to the new legation in Warsaw Mr. Fernando Gomez Contreras, who had previously been chargé

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<sup>524</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “[...] han perdurado en las mentes de checos y polacos hasta nuestros días y ha quedado para la posteridad como un grave precedente entre ambas naciones, un agravio nacional que ha ahondado la (a veces) mutua incomprensión y los prejuicios entre estos dos países vecinos y hermanos”.

<sup>525</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>526</sup> “Diario de las Sesiones de Cortes. Senado. Sesión regia de apertura de las cortes”. 24.06.1919 [https://www.senado.es/cgi-bin/verdocweb?tipo\\_bd=IDSH&Legislatura=1919-1920&Pagina=9&Bis=NO&Apendice1=&Boletin1=2&Apendice2=&Boletin2=](https://www.senado.es/cgi-bin/verdocweb?tipo_bd=IDSH&Legislatura=1919-1920&Pagina=9&Bis=NO&Apendice1=&Boletin1=2&Apendice2=&Boletin2=) [accessed on 15.02.2022].

<sup>527</sup> AHN, H1539, 28.06.1919, Spain’s state minister Manuel González Hontoria to Spain’s ambassador in France José María Quiñones de León

<sup>528</sup> L. Montilla Amador, *Las relaciones entre España y Checoslovaquia en la etapa de Entreguerras*, op. cit., p. 78.

d'affaires, namely "first class secretary" in Petrograd<sup>529</sup>, as chargé d'affaires in the new legation, so Poland had more diplomatic significance for Spain's State Ministry. However, it could be stated that despite Poland's bigger diplomatic significance, Spain's monarchy, government and diplomacy regarded both Poland and Czechoslovakia as two somehow similar nations, both being two new nations born under the auspice of the Entente and as a result of the Central Power's defeat in the war.

Both Poland-based Spain's diplomats (namely chargé d'affaires Fernando Gómez Contreras and his successor plenipotentiary minister Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera) and press contributors in Spain generally referred to the Cieszyn Silesia region as "Silesia de(l) Teschen" or just "Teschen", some mentioning later that the area was known in Polish as 'Cieszyn'. Sofía Casanova used the word "Tesen". This conflict had a quite limited echo in the Spanish press in comparison with other territorial conflicts Poland endured simultaneously. During the first months of the Polish-Czechoslovakian conflict over Cieszyn Silesia, among the examined Spanish newspapers only radio telegram-originated press notes can be found, and the Spanish editors and contributors neither did dedicate any article to the question nor mentioned it on texts referring to another related Polish or international topic. 'La Correspondencia de España' and 'El Sol' were the only newspapers with contributors paying true attention to the topic. The first reference to the question in the examined Spanish press sources is found on May 20, 1919, in an article by Hungarian journalist residing in Spain András Revesz<sup>530</sup> on 'El Sol', but in the context of Czech involvement in the Romanian-Hungarian conflict<sup>531</sup>. It is worth highlighting that two of the texts in the Spanish press that more in detail addressed the issue were written by a Hungarian and a Pole residing in Spain, and not by Spaniards, but surely these texts could have had a big impact on the Spanish public opinion regarding this conflict, so should also be thoroughly studied. In reality, four press contributors on the analysed press sources dealt with the Cieszyn conflict but only one among them could be regarded as a truly born Spaniard:

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<sup>529</sup> Fernando Gómez Contreras was Spain's chargé d'affaires in front of Soviet Russia from May until November 1918 See: "Tras las huellas de la familia del Zar. La gestión de Don Fernando Gómez Contreras, 'ABC', 30.03.1980, p.114-116, and Spain's chargé d'affaires in Warsaw from May 1919 (since September 1 1919 as chargé d'affaires *en pied*) until February 10 1920, when Gutiérrez de Agüera took charge of the legation as first-class plenipotentiary minister (after Agüera already having been appointed as such on November 13 1919). J. Ciechanowski; C. González Caizán, *Wojna polsko-rosyjska z perspektywy hiszpańskiej op.cit.*, p. 455-457; J. Ciechanowski, *Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera y Bayo*. Academia de la Historia (Spain's Royal History Academy). <https://dbe.rah.es/biografias/55263/francisco-Gutiérrez-de-Agüera-y-bayo> [accessed firstly on 14.02.2022]; F.J. Macías Martín, *La plena normalización de las relaciones diplomáticas entre España y Cuba 1924-1926*, "Tebeto: Anuario del Archivo Histórico Insular de Fuerteventura", N°. 16, 2003, págs. 185-204; p.198-199, footnote 36.

<sup>530</sup> Andor Révész in Hungarian. 1896-1970. Writer, political scientist, Hungarian-Spanish translator.

<sup>531</sup> "El caos húngaro. Los maximalistas reaccionan", 'El Sol', 20.05.1919, p. 7.

‘ABC’'s renowned Spanish correspondent in Warsaw Sofía Casanova. The others were: already mentioned aforementioned ‘El Sol’'s Hungarian writer András (signing as Andrés) Revesz, Polish artist and writer Tadeusz Peiper on the same newspaper, and one of ‘La Correspondencia de España’'s contributors, Polish-born Spanish aristocrat, businessman, diplomat and writer Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda, (a passionate of the Polish question, who as aforementioned, published a book about Poland in Spain in 1919<sup>532</sup>). Looking at their press contributions on the Cieszyn Silesia question, one can see that whereas Revesz not only but strongly focused on the historical background of the region and the Czechs’ economic motivations, Casimiro Granzów particularly focused on the region’s current social structure in relation with ethnography, and Peiper focused on arguing against most ideas presented by Revesz as valid Czech arguments for the region’s possession, from economic to historical, through strategic ones.

One of the four mentioned contributors, Granzów, was far from being a typical correspondent or commentator: since August 1919 Granzów de la Cerda was also part of Spanish diplomacy structure, because he worked in the Spanish legation in Warsaw, first as an honorary chancellor, and since March 1920 as a paid official chancellor<sup>533</sup>. On September 22, 1919 on ‘La Correspondencia de España’ he reported about his train trip from Paris through Vienna to Warsaw along with Spain’s chargé d’affaires in Warsaw Fernando Gómez Contreras, and explained to the readers that when they reached the new Austrian-Czechoslovak border in a town he called Braklawa [Břeclav], train passengers were checked their passports and luggage and there Granzów observed that Poles were treated in a tougher way than other nationals by the Czechoslovakian officials, what the Spaniard attributed to the Cieszyn dispute, which he connected to the coal basin<sup>534</sup>. In the article about his Vienna-Warsaw trip, Granzów also summarised and simplified the conflict over Cieszyn Silesia in the following way: “Poles say: Most population in this region is essentially Polish. Czechs reply: We need coal and we don’t have it, Teschen must be ours. And Poles protest once again: If you need it, buy it”<sup>535</sup>.

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<sup>532</sup> The book, containing a prologue by Spain’s State Minister Count of Romanones written in January 1919, and analysed in chapter 1, does not refer to the Cieszyn Silesia dispute. C. Granzów de la Cerda: *Polonia: su gloria en el pasado, su martirio y su resurrección*, San Sebastián 1919.

<sup>533</sup> J. Ciechanowski, *Casimiro Florencio Granzów y de la Cerda*. Academia de la Historia (Spain’s Royal History Academy) <https://dbe.rah.es/biografias/64470/casimiro-florencio-granzow-y-de-la-cerda>; [accessed 14.02.2022].

<sup>534</sup> “Impresiones de viaje. Paris-Viena-Varsovia (de nuestro redactor especial)”. ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 22.09.1919, p. 1.

<sup>535</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “ Los polacos dicen: - la mayoría de la población de dicha región es esencialmente polaca. Los checos responden: -Necesitamos carbón, y no lo tenemos. El Teschen debe ser nuestro. Y los polacos vuelven a protestar: “Si lo necesitáis, compradlo” ”.



Granzów could take advantage of his position to have access to relevant and significant information on Polish affairs, that he then used in his press articles. For instance, on January 31, 1920 on 'La Correspondencia de España' he reported about his meeting with Paderewski's in the latter's office in Warsaw on the same month. During the meeting, as reported by Granzów, the former Council of Ministers president and former foreign minister told him that in the Cieszyn Silesia's case, the same as in the Upper Silesian conflict with Germany, even though most population was Polish, the actions of the Czechs generated many problems for Poland regarding a plebiscite, and Paderewski also told Agüera that he hoped that "immanent justice of things" would take place, so that the region would return to Poland<sup>536</sup>.

It is worth highlighting that both in Gutiérrez de Agüera's diplomatic report to State Minister in February 20, 1920 and in Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda's article on March 10, 1920, we see a reference to the change made by the Interallied Commission on the status of the 3 February 1919 demarcation line agreed in Paris during the Peace Conference<sup>537</sup>. A change that, according to what both Spaniards reported, left 100.000 Poles, although temporarily, theoretically until the plebiscite would take place, outside the sovereignty of the new Polish state. It is rather likely that Casimiro Granzów either discussed the reality of the conflict with the plenipotentiary minister or even, that he used the diplomatic report written by the minister as his main source. Neither Agüera nor Granzow explained on their diplomatic report or press article, respectively, what was the origin of that demarcation line. Wojciech Roszkowski explains that: "as a result of Western mediations, on February 3,[1919] an agreement was sketched about establishing a new demarcation line that divided the disputed terrain until the moment of the plebiscite and according to which on the Czech side remained parts of the Cieszyn and Frystad districts with predominance of Polish population"<sup>538</sup>. Meanwhile, Kisielewski explains that this line was a "provisional border" that followed the Bohumin railway<sup>539</sup>. This is precisely the demarcation line that the Interallied Commission confirmed as an administrative line in February 1920 and, because of this, Poles were outraged, as both

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<sup>536</sup> "Desde Polonia, hablando con Paderewski (de nuestro redactor especial)", 'La Correspondencia de España', 31.03.1920, p. 1.

<sup>537</sup> Called "Paris protocol" by historian Ryszard Kaczmarek, who explains the new line was applied on February 25, and made that Polish troops returned to Polish ethnic areas. R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, *op. cit.*, p. 107-108.

<sup>538</sup> W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004*, *op. cit.*, p. 21. Original quoted text: „Na skutek mediacji zachodnich, 3 II parafowano w Paryżu porozumienie o wytyczeniu nowej linii demarkacyjnej, dzielącej sporny obszar do momentu przeprowadzenia plebiscytu, przy czym po stronie czeskiej pozostały części powiatów cieszyńskiego i frysztackiego z przewagą ludności polskiej”.

<sup>539</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

Agüera and Granzów reported. An argued criticism of the Interallied Commission's decision is found in the February 18, 1920 edition of Cracow-based Polish newspaper 'Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny'. The newspaper accused the French members of the Interallied Commission sent to Cieszyn Silesia by the Entente of both going against international law and being partial, and also listed its members' pro-Czech or pro-German alienation (as well mentioning the impartiality of one of the Italian members). The Cracovian newspaper also accused the Interallied Commission of "completely violating the February 3, 1919 agreement" and of having planned this decision in Paris even before arriving in Cieszyn. As a proof of the latter, the newspaper quoted a French member of the Commission, Flipot, having told a Pole [whose name the newspaper didn't reveal] in a reception organized by the Polish delegate in front of the Interallied Commission Jan Zamorski: "If this was a field of beetroot or carrots, we would not have come. But here it is about coal. The Czechs need coal necessarily. This must be understood"<sup>540</sup>. The Polish newspaper, as Agüera also reported to Spain's State Minister, also mentioned the fact that the Commission brought their own billboards addressed to local population and favourable to Czech interests, due to its good relations with the Czechs<sup>541</sup>.

Agüera reported that a Polish government representative, without mentioning his name, sent a complaint to the members of the Interallied Commission, arguing that "abuses" were committed against Poles by the Commission. On his report, Agüera, in fact, referred to the fact that Jan Zamorski, as reported by the "Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny", sent the Interallied Commission his objections. The Polish newspaper added that Zamorski also asked the Commission "to stop provisionally their work until he manages to reach an agreement with the Warsaw government" to which the Commission president Count Manneville replied "I have full power and I will use it as I please". In this context, 'Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny' also reported that Zamorski told Manneville he would resign, because Polish demands were not treated seriously by the Commission, and, in response, the French diplomat told him, according to the newspaper, that "the presence or absence of the Polish delegate will not affect the course of the mission at all"<sup>542</sup>.

Andrés Revesz advocated and justified in his text the Czech claims over Cieszyn Silesia, and Tadeusz Peiper, in his reply to Revesz, advocated and justified the Polish claims over the

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<sup>540</sup> „Słask staje w ogniu”, 'Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny', 18.02.1920, p.1. Original quoted words: „Si c'était un champ des betteraves ou des navets, gdyby tu chodziło o pole buraków lub marchewki, tobyśmy tu przecież nie przyjechali. Ale tu chodzi o węgiel. Węgla Czesi potrzebują koniecznie. To trzeba zrozumieć”.

<sup>541</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>542</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: „Mam pełną władzę i wykonam ją według swojego uznania”.

region<sup>543</sup>. “El Sol”’s Andrés Revesz connected the Polish-Czechoslovak conflict with the Czech-Hungarian clash in Upper Hungary within the context of the Hungarian-Romanian conflict [being Czechoslovakia at the time an unwritten allied of Romania against Hungary due to both nations’ common interests, what might be interpreted as the seeds of the future Little Entente]. The Hungarian writer claimed that the Czechs, despite being in a good situation to do so, due to the Hungarian-Romanian war, probably did not want to take advantage of the situation and attack Hungary militarily further due to the Czech’s then very active “rivalry with Poland regarding the Duchy of Teschen [Cieszyn] which has very rich coal deposits, but that’s only an assumption”<sup>544</sup>.

The Little Entente question is seen, in connection with the Cieszyn Silesia question, on Agüera’s November 6, 1920 report to Spain’s State Minister, in which Spain’s minister in Warsaw wrote that Polish foreign minister told him that because, on the one hand, the Riga Treaty was not yet signed, and on the other hand, there were still unsolved problems regarding Poland and the other Small Entente members, it was difficult to get support from Polish politicians to an adherence to the Small Entente alliance, what Agüera interpreted as a reference to the Cieszyn Silesia conflict with Czechoslovakia<sup>545</sup>.

On to another question, as Hungarian journalist Andrezs Revesz very well understood, the disputed region coal’s wealthiness is one of the main factors to be taken into account when analysing this conflict. Interestingly enough, we cannot see references to coal as a factor in the dispute in Gutiérrez de Agüera’s diplomatic reports whereas we see many references to coal in the Spanish press comments dedicated to the Polish-Czechoslovakian conflict over this region. For instance, Granzów de la Cerda stated that “Czechoslovaks intend to get a hold of the coal basin of Teschen”<sup>546</sup> and Andrezs Revesz analysed the fact that Checks claimed the disputed region because of their coal needs for their industry, what he defined as a “vital interests” argument. He developed the idea further by claiming that Czechs were right when they said that the Czech industry in Maehrish Ostrau (Moravská Ostrava) could not function without the coal mines in Frustat and Cieszyn and, in order to support his view, he quoted Czech politician and former Czechoslovakian Prime Minister Karel Kramář: “a State that does not own the coal it

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<sup>543</sup>“Territorios en litigio. El problema de Teschen. El punto de visto checo”, ‘El Sol’, 7.09.1919, p. 7; “Contestando a Andres Revesz. El problema de Teschen”, ‘El Sol’, 14.09.1919, p. 6.

<sup>544</sup> “El caos húngaro. Los maximalistas reaccionan”, ‘El Sol’ 20.05.1919, p. 7.

<sup>545</sup> AHN, H1681, 6.11.1920, Spain’s plenipotenciary minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Manuel González Hontoria.

<sup>546</sup> “Desde Polonia. El estado político. De Nuestro redactor especial”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 26.09.1919, p. 1.

needs, is the slave of the country supplying it the coal”<sup>547</sup>, whereas Tadeusz Peiper claimed that “[...]in the district that Poles yielded to the Checks half of the [coal] mining basin of the province is found”<sup>548</sup>.

What is even clearer is that the historical rights and the nationality principle were at the core of both Revesz and Peiper’s articles on the conflict. Both Revesz and Peiper agreed on the fact the Czechs admitted the ethnographic Polish predominance, but at the same time believed historical rights were a better criteria to solve the problem than the nationalities principle, i.e. the ethnographic majority determining to which state the disputed territory belongs to. In addition, Peiper explained that before the Treaty of Versailles, Poland used to base some of its claims of the disputed region on historical rights, the same that the Czechs were doing now regarding Cieszyn Silesia, but then this changed because the Paris Peace Conference used ethnographic criteria to establish the German-Polish borders and did not take into account Poland’s historical claims on the disputed German Polish territories. Peiper, therefore, argued that in the Cieszyn Silesia case the Paris Peace Conference should keep relying on the principle of nationalities<sup>549</sup>.

The conflicted region’s history was also a matter of dispute on the pages of “El Sol”. Revesz argued that the Czechs’ historical rights over the region were well-based because the Cieszyn Silesia region was always part of the Bohemian Kingdom, which had not disappeared “from a juridical point of view”<sup>550</sup>, but Peiper argued that not only the Czechs were wrong to use the “unfair” historical argument instead of the ethnographic one, but also argued that the historical rights argument could not be “exactly” applied this way in this dispute. He claimed that the problem when using the historical rights as an argument to solve a territorial dispute was not only the always difficult issue of ownership of a territory from a historical perspective, but also, in this specific case, the particular complex relations between Silesia and Bohemia historically. He developed the region’s history and argued that Bohemia never completely “absorbed” Silesia<sup>551</sup>.

An observation should also be made regarding demographic statistics from the disputed region given by Agüera, Granzów, Revesz and Peiper in 1919 and 1920 in the Spanish press,

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<sup>547</sup> “Territorios en litigio. El problema de Teschen. El punto de visto checo”, ‘El Sol’, 7.09. 1919, p. 7.

<sup>548</sup> “Contestando a Andres Revesz. El problema de Teschen”, ‘El Sol’, 14.09.1919, p. 6. Original quoted text: “[...]en el distrito que los polacos ceden a los checos se encuentra la mitad de toda la cuenca hullera de la provincia”.

<sup>549</sup> “Contestando a Andres Revesz. El problema de Teschen”, ‘El Sol’, 14.09.1919, p. 6.

<sup>550</sup> “Territorios en litigio. El problema de Teschen. El punto de visto checo”, ‘El Sol’, 7.09.1919, p. 7.

<sup>551</sup> “Contestando a Andres Revesz. El problema de Teschen”, ‘El Sol’, 14.09.1919, p. 6.

as well as regarding statistics provided by historians who have researched the conflict. On his March 10, 1920 press article on ‘La Correspondencia de España’, Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda reported that, according to “official” statistics by Czorny and Buzek, in the Cieszyn Silesia 76.4% of the population were Poles, 14% were Czechs and Germans were a 9,6%<sup>552</sup>. Tadeusz Peiper, without mentioning the source of his data, mentioned 69% of Poles and 11% of Czechs (disregarding other minorities this would give around 20% Germans)<sup>553</sup> while Andrés Revesz, also without mentioning the source of his data, listed 233.850 Poles (50.1%), 155600 Czechs (33.4%) and 76900 Germans (16.5%)<sup>554</sup>. Spanish historian Manuel Chacón mentions that 139.016 Poles (45.8%), according to the 1910 Austro-Hungarian demographic census, lived in the region<sup>555</sup>, but according to Janusz Gruchala and Krzysztof Nowak, the 1910 population census indicated a 54.8% of the population was Polish (lower than the 60.7% figure from the 1900 census)<sup>556</sup>. As it can be seen in the numbers just listed, the differences across authors are significant. Granzów gave the most favourable statistic for Poland, whereas Revesz the most favourable for Czechs, even though the percentage of Poles mentioned by Chacon is still lower. When it comes to the political demographic situation after the Ambassadors Council decision to divide the Cieszyn Silesia territory, Chacon states that 31.5 % of the disputed region’s population was assigned to Poland, a 68.5% was assigned to Czechoslovakia and in terms of territory 1273 km<sup>2</sup> were for Czechs and 1017 km<sup>2</sup> were for Poles. Very similar, although not exactly equal, data is given by Kisielewski: Czechoslovakia 1280 km<sup>2</sup>, Poland: 1002 km<sup>2</sup>.

Another important question to pay attention to in relation to this conflict are politically significant incidents. For instance, as reported by Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera on March 20, 1920: there was an incident in the Karwin mine, where the action by the Czech police caused several deaths and the resulting fact of the interallied plebiscite Commission declaring “the war state” in the whole area<sup>557</sup>. Comments or analysis on the violent incidents between Poles and Czechs reported by Spain’s plenipotentiary minister on

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<sup>552</sup> “Desde Polonia. Ante el plebiscito en la Silesia del Teschen. De nuestro redactor especial”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 10.03.1920, p.1

<sup>553</sup> “Contestando a Andres Revesz. El problema de Teschen”, ‘El Sol’, 14.09.1919, p. 6.

<sup>554</sup> “Territorios en litigio. El problema de Teschen. El punto de visto checo”, ‘El Sol’, 7.09. 1919, p. 7.

<sup>555</sup> M. Chacón Rodriguez, La cuestión checo-polaca de Teschen: breve perspectiva histórica y actual, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>556</sup> *Dzieje Śląska Cieszyńskiego od zarania do czasów współczesnych. TOM V. Śląsk Cieszyński od Wiosny Ludów do I wojny światowej (1848-1918)*, pod. red. J.Gruchala, K. Nowak, p. 163.

<sup>557</sup> AHN, H1681, 20.03.1920. Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

March 20 are not found on contributions or comments on the investigated press sources, and these are only mentioned on foreign telegraphic press notes.

A very detailed description of the Karwin mine incidents is also found on the March 12, 1920 edition of Polish newspaper ‘Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny’. On the Cracovian newspaper we read the headline “Terrible pogrom of Polish population in Karwin”<sup>558</sup>. In addition, on the same newspaper’s issue of the following day, we read that the Interallied Commission “plans to implement a war state and summary courts”, as Agüera had reported to Spain’s state ministry<sup>559</sup>. Spain’s minister in Warsaw also reported to State Ministry that the Commission removed the Polish guards from the area but didn’t withdraw the Czech ones, what generated indignation among the Polish population of the area, which because of this did not see the conditions to organize a plebiscite and requested from the Polish government an “energetic” intervention “which would not allow the new [Polish] state to be deprived from [Cieszyn] Silesia by means of intrigues and forgeries”<sup>560</sup>.

On to another aspect of the conflict especially relevant in this thesis, it must be explained that Spain’s diplomacy wasn’t completely untouched by the Cieszyn Silesia question. The Polish-Czech conflict had direct consequences on the way to operate of the Spanish diplomacy regarding their new diplomatic mission in Poland established in 1919. These consequences were problems related with sending diplomatic correspondence between the legation in Warsaw and State Ministry in Madrid, given that Poland was not yet part of the telegraphic network, and because—as reported Spanish chargé d’affaires in Warsaw Fernando Gomez Contreras in a diplomatic report sent in August 1919 to the State Minister—the new Czechoslovakian state, due to the conflict over “the Teschen coal basin”, boycotted correspondence leaving the country that had to go through Czechoslovakia. Gómez Contreras added that German Austrians were also boycotting correspondence from Poland and other new states resulting from the Austrian Empire disintegration. This situation forced Spain’s State Ministry to look for an alternative, which consisted in sending the diplomatic correspondence through French diplomatic correspondence channel traveling from Poland to France, so Contreras asked the minister that

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<sup>558</sup> “Straszliwy pogrom ludności polskiej w Karwinie”, ‘Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny’, 12.03.1920, p. 1. <http://mbc.malopolska.pl/dlibra/publication?id=81690&tab=3> [accessed on 16.02.2022]

<sup>559</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>560</sup> AHN, H1681, 12.03.1920. Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor). Original quoted text: “no permitiendo que este nuevo estado, quede despojado de la Silesia por medio de intrigas y falsificaciones”.

any correspondence to the Polish legation should be sent first to Spain's embassy in Paris and from there to Poland<sup>561</sup>.

As a result of the agreements in the Spa conference, on July 28, 1920 the Entente Ambassadors Council, as an action of arbitration, announced the cancellation of the plebiscite and the division of the disputed territories between Czechoslovakia and Poland<sup>562</sup>. Just a few days before, Agüera on July 19 reported about Władysław Grabski's participation in the Spa conference and claimed that himself didn't yet know the conditions of the armistice that Britain had proposed to Poland and Soviet Russia, because Grabski had not revealed them, but Agüera believed this would include among others that "Poland must renounce any policy that is imperialist" and also that the allied Supreme Council would have the power to resolve all the territorial conflicts concerning Poland, including Gdańsk and Cieszyn Silesia<sup>563</sup>. 'ABC's correspondent Sofia Casanova reacted to the Ambassadors Council's arbitration for the Cieszyn Silesia conflict stating that "Teschen Silesia has been given to the Czechs, separating her from Poland"<sup>564</sup>. Tadeusz Kisielewski argues that Czechs took advantage of the difficult situation in which the Polish-Soviet War left Poland for their cause in Cieszyn Silesia and Poland was forced to give up the referendum in exchange to Czech commitment to allow arms shipment to Poland through their country<sup>565</sup>. Ryszard Kaczmarek argues that the Polish government's acceptance of an arbitration by the allied powers, instead of a plebiscite, was due to this being a requirement for allied support to the new Polish state in the context of the Polish-Soviet war<sup>566</sup> and adds that "unlike in the plebiscites in the German-Polish bordering areas, the continued tension in Cieszyn Silesia and Poland's weakening international position in the summer of 1920 forced Grabski's government to resign from the realization of a voting and to almost capitulate on this question"<sup>567</sup>. Manuel Chacon highlights the fact that, despite the closure of the territorial problem, Poland and Czechoslovakia never signed any document to officialise the resolution of the dispute and Polish-Czechoslovakian diplomatic relations were not "normalized" since

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<sup>561</sup> *Ibidem*, 28.08.1919, Spain's chargé d'affaires in Warsaw Fernando Gómez Contreras to Spain's state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>562</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 262 ; R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, *op. cit.*, p. 108; W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004*, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>563</sup> AHN, H1681, 19.07.1920. Spain's plenipotenciary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>564</sup> "Intervalo de paz sin paz", 'ABC', 10.12.1920, p. 3.

<sup>565</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i Niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 263

<sup>566</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>567</sup> *Ibidem*.

the moment the conflict began<sup>568</sup>. In addition, it should be taken into account that, as Revesz explained, to his readers on “El Sol”, Czechs in reality didn’t want a plebiscite because they understood the disputed area was already part of their state. In addition, the Hungarian-Spanish writer claimed the Czechs were doing by this the same France did when it “demanded” Alsace and Lorraine after the war<sup>569</sup>. In a way, this could explain France’s legitimation of the Czech attitude towards the idea of a plebiscite. What cannot be denied is that Poland’s position in the Spa Conference, due to the country’s critical position in the Polish-Soviet War, was not strong enough to defend its cause regarding the Cieszyn dispute and to face the rather pro-Czech French stand on the conflict.

Last but not least, an important aspect of the conflict, well reflected in Agüera’s reports and on press comments is the—leaving government aside—Polish politicians’ harsh criticism of France, of alleged pro-Czech French alignment on this dispute and the damage French attitude in Cieszyn could have had on French-Polish relations. Agüera reported that on the February 18 Sejm gathering, Polish Foreign Minister Stanisław Patek<sup>570</sup> stated that he, following the pressures of certain political groups in the Sejm, would ask the Western Allies for a just and impartial plebiscite, in order “to change the procedures of the plebiscite Commission” but the Polish foreign minister, Agüera reported, at the same time pointed out Poland should maintain “the French-Polish friendship” despite this event, so that “France can help us to solve quickly and favourable the complicated question of Teschen’s Silesia”<sup>571</sup>. The Polish-French challenge resulting from this dispute was also commented by Granzów de la Cerda in one of his articles regarding the Cieszyn question. Granzów argued that the Germans wanted a separation of France and Poland, but this would not occur because the two countries were “too united, in too much need one from another, to be separated by unpleasant, true, incidents that we could call “*de coulisses*”<sup>572</sup>. This view by Granzów can be connected to a similar view, advocated by Polish Foreign Minister Stanisław Patek in the Sejm on February 18, 1920, and reported by minister Agüera, namely, that relations between France and Poland were too important and

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<sup>568</sup> M. Chacón Rodríguez, *La cuestión checo-polaca de Teschen: breve perspectiva histórica y actual*, op. cit., p. 189.

<sup>569</sup> “Territorios en litigio. El problema de Teschen. El punto de visto checo”. “El Sol”, 7.09.1919, p. 7.

<sup>570</sup> For a good understanding of the work of Patek (often mentioned and quoted by Agüera in his correspondence in 1920) as Poland’s Foreign Minister since December 1919 until June 1920 it is worth reading: M. Gmurczyk-Wrońska, *Stanisław Patek w dyplomacji i polityce (1914-1939)*, Instytut Historii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wydawnictwo Neriton, Warszawa 2013.

<sup>571</sup> AHN, H1681, 20.02.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>572</sup> “Desde Polonia. Ante el plebiscito en la Silesia del Teschen. De nuestro redactor especial”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 10.03.1920, p. 1.



useful for Poland to be broken because of discrepancies in the Cieszyn Silesia question<sup>573</sup>. In relation to this, it must be also taken into account that as historian Małgorzata Gmurczyk-Wrońska explains, in February 1920 Patek, along with Pilsudski and Skulski, met French general Paul Henrys in order to ask France for help against the Bolsheviks, to generate awareness about the Bolshevik danger and to show “concern about the beginning by the Entente of economic relations with Soviet Russia”<sup>574</sup>. It must be also taken into account that, as the same author explains, “in February [1920] Patek had a few conversations with the representatives of the Entente countries in Warsaw, during which he initially informed them about the Polish preparatory plans for talks with the Bolsheviks”<sup>575</sup>. In other words, it seems clear at that point, in February 1920, Patek understood that a positive and supportive French stand for Poland on the Polish-Soviet war was at stake, and it was not worth risking losing this French support because of Poland’s dissatisfaction with the French stand on the Cieszyn Silesia question.

## Conclusions

It can be concluded, on the one hand, that claiming Gutiérrez de Agüera in his diplomatic reports was favourable to Poland’s interests in this dispute and was, instead, critical of the Czech and French attitude in the conflict, is a valid interpretation of his diplomatic reports—despite the Spanish experienced diplomat not expressing his own position as clearly as his legation chancellor Granzów de la Cerda, who also advocated the Polish cause in the Spanish press as a contributor. On the other hand, in Spain the Cieszyn Silesia conflict, between two new states under the Entente patronage which Spain recognized officially a few months after an armed conflict between them, had a similar impact than the East Prussian (Warmia, Masuria and Powiśle) plebiscite but had fewer impacts than the Upper Silesian dispute and far fewer impacts than the Polish-Soviet War and the Vilna dispute. However, the Cieszyn question was deeply analysed by the Spanish plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw and his chancellor in

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<sup>573</sup> AHN, H1681, 20.02.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>574</sup> M. Gmurczyk-Wrońska, *Stanisław Patek w dyplomacji i polityce (1914-1939)*, *op. cit.*, p.117. Original quoted words: „[...] niepokój faktem zapoczątkowania przez Ententę stosunków gospodarczych z Rosją Sowiecką”.

<sup>575</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 118. Original quoted text: “W lutym Patek odbył kilka rozmów z przedstawicielami państw Ententy w Warszawie, w czasie których informował ich wstępnie o polskich planach przygotowawczych do rozmów z bolszewikami”.

the embassy, as well as by two foreign intellectuals in Madrid, Revesz and Peiper, among others.

## Spain and the Polish-German conflict over Upper Silesia 1919-1921

The Upper Silesian question had much more echoes in the Spanish press than in diplomatic correspondence between Spain's State Ministry and the country's diplomatic missions—it is seen when looking at the examined primary sources. In the Spanish press, the Upper Silesian question generated a larger impact than the Greater Poland Uprising, the East Prussian plebiscite and the Cieszyn Silesia conflict. It must be underlined that the plebiscite itself had more impact in the Spanish press than all the events preceding it. However, the first two Silesian Uprisings were not a focus of attention in the Spanish press and the editors' and contributors' focus was mainly on the plebiscite, the Allies' stand and Poland's and Germany's claims on the disputed region.

The newspapers that most paid attention to the Upper Silesian question were 'ABC' and 'La Correspondencia de España', but the conflict was commented as well by 'La Época', 'El Liberal', 'Heraldo de Madrid', 'El Imparcial', 'La Acción' and 'El Sol', i.e. by several newspapers across the Spanish press ideological spectrum. The fact 'ABC' used a total of six times its "Boletín del Día" (The Day's Newsletter), the daily section dedicated to comment international affairs, to the Upper Silesian question is very telling about the impact of this question in the Spanish press.

Many more examined Spanish primary sources regarding the Upper Silesian question are seen in the years 1920 and 1921 than in 1919. The largest number of sources is found in late 1920 and early 1921 due to the second Silesian Uprising and, even more, the events leading to it, as well as the proximity in the calendar of the plebiscite.

The first reference in the Spanish press to the Upper Silesian dispute is found on December 26, 1918, when 'ABC's' correspondent in Berlin Javier Bueno claimed that Polish troops were ready to invade Silesia after the breakup of diplomatic relations between Poland and Germany and that, as he expected, the war declaration of Poland to Germany had the goal of creating a *fait accompli* in both Silesia and Poznań regions in front of the Entente before the Paris Peace Conference<sup>576</sup>. Polish historian Ryszard Kaczmarek explains that in early 1919 [not in late December 1918 when 'ABC's' Bueno reported about this possibility] when in the Paris

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<sup>576</sup> "Consecuencias de la destrucción del ejército alemán", 'ABC', 26.12.1918, p. 7.

Peace Conference there was a proposal to assign Upper Silesia to Poland, the German military command in Breslau “started seriously considering the possibility of an outburst of a Polish-German war”<sup>577</sup> but that until that moment German military leaders were only concerned about “inner safety” and about controlling the border with Poland. Kaczmarek adds that in the Opole divisions there was also, due to the events in the peace conference, a change of priorities from focusing on the danger generated by the Spartacusian revolutionists to focus on “Polish army conspiracy-oriented activity” that could allow the Polish army “to repeat the script from Greater Poland, meaning obtaining a move of the borders even before ultimate political decisions”. The author also explains that the German high command in early 1919 expected much more a direct Polish-German armed conflict rather than an uprising, and believed the Polish army had a stronger presence than German troops in the Silesian border between both states<sup>578</sup>. Neither of the main consulted scientific literature works consulted on the Upper Silesian question, either by aforementioned Ryszard Kaczmarek or by historian Wiesław Dobrzycki or by historian Tadeusz Jędruszczak, mention any declaration of war by Poland to Germany having been issued<sup>579</sup>.

One of the main foci of the Spanish press articles dedicated to the Upper Silesian question was the plebiscite itself and the final assignation of the region, as well as the economic and political significance of the region, not only for both Germany and Poland but also for the Western Powers. In relation to this, it is essential to analyse, as in the case of other territorial disputes of the new Polish state, the Spanish views on and references to the arguments presented by the Polish and German sides to justify the belonging of the disputed Upper Silesian territory to their state. Most arguments presented as German and Polish arguments to claim the disputed region in the examined primary sources and in scientific literature are of economic (Upper Silesian coal being the solution to economic problems) or strategic nature, but ethnographic, demographic and historical arguments also appear in the consulted sources. For instance, demographic or ethnographic reasons appear in Polish historian Jędruszczak’s statement that the ethnographic reality, showing the region as mostly Polish, was the main argument that justified the belonging of the disputed region to Poland<sup>580</sup> and these are also seen in his

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<sup>577</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921 Nieznana Wojna Polsko-Niemiecka*, Kraków 2019, p. 95. Original quoted text: „zaczęto na poważnie rozważać możliwość wybuchu wojny polsko-niemieckiej”.

<sup>578</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: „do powtórzenia scenariusza z Wielkopolski, czyli dokonania przesunięcia granicy jeszcze przed ostatecznymi decyzjami politycznymi”.

<sup>579</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921 Nieznana Wojna Polsko-Niemiecka*, *op. cit.*; T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, Katowice 1959; W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, Warszawa 1971.

<sup>580</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

comment that 1910 and 1911 German census data could have been enough, in line with Wilson's 13<sup>th</sup> point, for the Entente to give Poland Upper Silesia<sup>581</sup>.

### **Historical aspects of the Upper Silesia conflict**

In one of his chronicles from Warsaw, Casimiro Granzów focused on historical arguments in relation to the Upper Silesian dispute, and claimed that German historical claims on the region were not valid because Germans took Upper Silesia from Poland in the past, whereas at the same time he legitimized Polish historical rights over the region by claiming that those workers in Silesian mines and factories were Poles of the Piast, “the most pure Polish race”<sup>582</sup>. On the same newspaper, Alberto Insúa also referred to the fact Upper Silesia had been taken by Germany due to historical conquest<sup>583</sup>. Both Polish historian Kaczmarek and German historian Böhler explain that Upper Silesia was never part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth but neither of them reckons this was a historical fact that prevented Poland from claiming the region<sup>584</sup>. Meanwhile, Sofía Casanova also focused on the historical background of the region in relation to Polish claims of the disputed territory and explained that “Silesian Poles have been feeling as such [Poles] for six hundred years, even though this region was transferred from some nations to others in such a huge time span”, adding that the Polish kingdom and the Bohemian kingdom competed for the region between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>585</sup>. Casanova did not refer to the following centuries and then claimed that Frederik II, King of Prussia took control of the region in 1741 and annexed it to Prussia after winning the battle of Molvitz<sup>586</sup>, without mentioning when this annexation happened exactly. Casanova did not refer to the historical political situation of the region after that moment.

It is at this point worth commenting that in his 1919 book Polish archaeologist and ethnographer residing in Madrid, Eugeniusz Frankowski, highlighted that “the Silesia that Casimir the Great, King of Poland, abandoned in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, has slowly returned to the

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<sup>581</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 25.

<sup>582</sup> “Desde Polonia. La Leyenda de Silesia. De nuestro redactor especial”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 4.01.1921, p. 1

<sup>583</sup> “En torno al tratado, el alegato de Brockdorff” (*de nuestro redactor en Paris*), La Correspondencia de España, 5.06.1919, p. 1.

<sup>584</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Powstania Slaskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.* p.20; J. Böhler, *Wojna domowa. Nowe Spojrzenie na odrodzenie Polski*, *op. cit.*, p.150-151.

<sup>585</sup> “El plebiscito en Alta Silesia”, ‘ABC’, 25.01.1921, p. 3.

<sup>586</sup> *Ibidem*.

hands of its former owners, despite all the obstacles”<sup>587</sup>. What Frankowski wrote regarding Casimir the Great was in line with what both Granzów and Casanova wrote, but added a more detailed and different perspective on the moment Upper Silesia stopped being Polish and did not explicitly present it as a German takeover. In addition, it is worth mentioning that it can be interpreted that Frankowski in May 1919 believed Poland controlling part or the whole Upper Silesia was a very likely possibility.

### **Ethnographic and Demographic Aspects**

Ethnographic arguments in favour of Poland’s control of Upper Silesia were mentioned by Alberto Insúa, who claimed the region was purely Slavic, and who, in fact, didn’t write whatsoever that Poland was using this ethnographic argument to claim the disputed territory<sup>588</sup>.

Some of the Spanish press texts on the Upper Silesian question criticized the Polish and German arguments to claim the disputed region. For instance, on December 6, 1920 Germanophile newspaper ‘La Acción’ claimed that Poles were able to use as an argument for the plebiscite the fact that many Poles born in Poland were hired in the Silesian industry and mines, but he added this was not a serious argument since there were Poles living in other regions of Germany and there were no reasons on those regions inhabited by Poles to organize a plebiscite<sup>589</sup>. In other words, ‘La Acción’ refused the argument based on employed Polish nationals in the region.

Demographic aspects of Upper Silesia were also analysed in the Spanish press, in relation to Polish and German claims of the region. In fact, there were a few references on the examined press sources to ethnographic or demographic data in the Upper Silesia region. For instance, press commentators and correspondents provided census data to illustrate the demographic reality of the disputed territory. Whereas on June 22, 1919 Granzów de la Cerda had referred to the 1910 census data, which in his view had been manipulated by the Germans, and had provided his readers the figures from such census of 12400000 Poles and 625000 Germans in the region, as well as that of 308000 Polish children against 74000 German children<sup>590</sup>, both Alberto Insúa and Sofía Casanova also referred to the demographic question

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<sup>587</sup> E. Frankowski, *Polonia y su misión en Europa*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>588</sup> “En torno al tratado, el alegato de Brockdorff (de nuestro redactor en Paris)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 5.06.1919, p. 1.

<sup>589</sup> “De interés mundial. Boletín diario de política extranjera. El problema de la Alta Silesia”. ‘La Acción’, 6.12.1920, p. 2.

<sup>590</sup> “Polonia y la Alta Silesia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 22.06.1919, p. 1.

in 1921. Casanova did not refer to the pre-war German census but gave data from 1919, without describing her source with details, which consisted in 1458500 Poles against 558000 Germans in the disputed region<sup>591</sup> and Insúa, a few weeks later, just before the plebiscite, referred to the 1910 demographic data, as Granzów had done, by giving the following figures: “1,226,687 Slavs, all Polish except 57,000 Czechs, and 884,045 Germans”<sup>592</sup>. It is important to remark that the numbers of Poles from the 1910 census featured by both Casimiro Granzów and Insúa on ‘La Correspondencia de España’ are very similar but do not match exactly, and the number of Germans given by Granzów is over 200.000 larger than the figure given by Insúa. When comparing these demographic data in the primary sources with data mentioned in scientific literature, we see that Polish historian T. Jędruszczak claims the pre-war German demographic data of the region indicated Poles represented 65 to 75% of the total population, which amounted for more than 2 million. However, T. Jędruszczak questions the accuracy of these data, by checking that the 1910 data reported around 120000 Poles and 800000 Germans but the 191 children census data, based on schooling data, indicated around 1550000 Poles and 550000 Germans<sup>593</sup>.

It is important to visualize the mentioned demographic data by seeing that the 1911 children census figure Casimiro Granzów referred to represents a ratio of around 4 Poles for every German, whereas the pre-war figure Jędruszczak mentions represents almost 3 Poles for every German, but the census data ratio is more favourable to Poles when only counting children. The demographic data provided by Casanova implied a ratio of 2.6 Poles for every German, whereas the data given by Insúa imply a much lower ratio of 1.32 Poles for every German. In any case, in all the demographic data sources used by Spanish press contributors the number of Poles was higher than the number of Germans in the region.

However, Jędruszczak argues that these pre-war German data are not reliable because Germans falsified the data to “show the German character of Upper Silesia, similar as it happened in relation to other Polish lands seized by Germans”<sup>594</sup>. The same view is held by Dobrzycki, who explains that before the Great War, Germans tried to manipulate the census data and included the term bilingual in the census’s possible options to choose. He refers to the 1910 census to report 53% of Upper Silesians having Polish as their mother tongue, and 4%

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<sup>591</sup> “El plebiscito en Alta Silesia”, ‘ABC’, 25.01.1921, p. 3-4.

<sup>592</sup> “Después de la conferencia de Londres. El motivo de la ruptura (de nuestro redactor en París)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 16.03.1921, p. 2.

<sup>593</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 11-12.

<sup>594</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “by wykazać niemiecki charakter Górnego Śląska, podobnie zresztą jak to miało miejsce i w stosunku do innych ziem polskich, zagarniętych przez Niemców”.

being bilingual in German and Polish, but highlights this percentage of bilinguals increased to 75% when considering only the districts “on the right bank of the Oder river”<sup>595</sup>, where the percentage of Poles was much higher.

Jędruszczak adds that the ethnographic reality, showing the region as mostly Polish, was the main argument that justified the belonging of the disputed region to Poland<sup>596</sup>. He also explains that Germany, in order to fight against this Polish argument, recognized the Polish prevalent ethnicity of the region, but did not recognize the prevalent Polish identity among Upper Silesians, i.e. Germans argued that Silesian Poles actually identified themselves as Germans, what the author regards as false and simply as propaganda, in spite of a relatively “low level of national awareness” in the region. The author backs his claim that the German argument about Silesian Poles identifying themselves as German was false in the fact that Silesian Poles launched uprisings against their German rule<sup>597</sup>.

### **Economic Aspects behind the Upper Silesian Conflict**

Economic aspects and causes of the Upper Silesian dispute are very present in the examined Spanish sources. In fact, the references to the region’s coal and natural resources wealthiness are constant on the analysed press articles. The significance of coal for the German economy was particularly highlighted in the Spanish press analysis of the Upper Silesian question. For instance, according to pro-allied newspaper ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, Germans used the argument of coal being essential for Germany’s economic survival<sup>598</sup>, and ‘ABC’ more specifically stated that Germany used 65% of the Silesian coal in the country’s own industry<sup>599</sup>. From the other side, looking at references to Poland’s interest in the region’s coal, it must be also highlighted that on ‘La Época’, Mariano Marfil argued that if Upper Silesia was given to Poland, the new state would enjoy economic independence and would be able to export<sup>600</sup>. ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’ also looked at the coal question from the Polish side and argued that, at the time, Polish industry experienced “bewilderment and anarchy” not due to “Polish incapacity” as Germans argued, but due to a lack of coal<sup>601</sup>.

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<sup>595</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>596</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>597</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 13

<sup>598</sup> “El plebiscito de Alta Silesia y las reparaciones”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 23.03.1921, p. 1.

<sup>599</sup> “Boletín del día, el plebiscito en Alta Silesia”, ‘ABC’, 20.03.1921, p. 17.

<sup>600</sup> “Vida exterior, el plebiscito de la Alta Silesia”, ‘La Época’, 21.03.1921, p. 1.

<sup>601</sup> “El plebiscito de Alta Silesia y las reparaciones”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 23.03.1921, p. 1.

Another coal-related aspect mentioned by the Spanish press was the fact that Germany was supposed to provide the Entente with coal to pay its debt, in compliance with the Treaty of Versailles. In relation to these forced coal deliveries, on July 11, 1920, 'ABC' argued that after two years of supporting more Polish arguments than German claims over Upper Silesia, the Entente changed its stand on the Upper Silesian question, and it was willing to give the coal territories of Upper Silesia to Germany, because the Germans often reminded the Entente that they would not be able to deliver coal to pay its debts established in Versailles if Upper Silesia was given to Poland<sup>602</sup>. Similarly, a few months later, 'ABC's Casanova claimed that Germany told the Entente that it would not be able to pay its coal debt to the Allies if Upper Silesian became Polish<sup>603</sup>. From the opposite angle, the legitimacy of the allocation to Poland of the Upper Silesian coal was also commented by the Spanish press. In favour of this legitimacy, on 'El Liberal', was Manuel Mateo Campos, who claimed that "Poles are the owners of the Silesian coal basin" and added that the Silesian coal basin is "Polish in its roots"<sup>604</sup>. On the other hand, 'ABC' explained that Poland demanded the Upper Silesian coal basin, by referring to the Versailles Treaty<sup>605</sup>. 'El Sol's correspondent in Germany, Julio Álvarez del Vayo (about whose political views there is a reference in Chapter 3, in the subchapter about Polish-Soviet War) focused on the negative potential implications for the region of the coal basin being transferred to Poland, and claimed that if Upper Silesia was given to Poland, there would be a diminishment of coal production in the region's coal basin because "Poles lack managing technical capacity since all those responsible for the mines are German"<sup>606</sup>.

From the examined Spanish press sources, it is also inferred that Spanish press commentators and correspondents saw, by looking at economic aspects behind the conflict, that the Upper Silesian question was something that went beyond the dispute between Germany and Poland and had to do with the economic interests of third nations. For instance, while 'La Acción' highlighted that the region's underground wealthiness was interesting for the Allies<sup>607</sup>, 'ABC' stated the Silesian plebiscite was important for the nations with a significant role "in the chain of the economy"<sup>608</sup>.

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<sup>602</sup> "Boletín del día. El pleito de la Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 11.07.1920, p. 19.

<sup>603</sup> "El plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 25.01.1921, p. 3-4.

<sup>604</sup> "Berlín, plebiscitos y camamas", 'El Liberal', 12.08.1920, p. 3.

<sup>605</sup> "Boletín del día. El pleito de la Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 11.07.1920, p. 19.

<sup>606</sup> "El problema de Alta Silesia", 'El Sol', 28.01.1920, p. 1.

<sup>607</sup> "De interés mundial. Boletín diario de política extranjera. El problema de la Alta Silesia". 'La Acción', 6.12.1920, p. 2.

<sup>608</sup> "Boletín del día. El plebiscito en Alta Silesia!", 'ABC', 20.03.1921, p. 17.



When looking at Polish scientific literature for references on economic reasons for the conflict, we see that Polish historian Jędruszczak highlights the economic significance of Upper Silesia, argues this was the most important factor of the conflict, although “not the only one” and claims that this is why the Entente was so engaged in the conflict. He also claims this economic significance of the Upper Silesian disputed region was the main difference between this conflict and the question of Warmia and Masuria in Eastern Prussia, or the dispute over Gdańsk, both in terms of length and presence of the armed conflict. More specifically on the topic, he explains that the Upper Silesian region was rich not only in coal but also in “zinc, graphite and iron ore” and he also explains that around 250.000 hired workers worked in Upper Silesia’s industry before the Great War’s outburst, whereas in Poland there were around 600.000 industry workers hired at the beginning of the new independent Polish state, so what was at stake in this German-Polish conflict over the disputed region was really a lot, the author argues<sup>609</sup>. In relation to access to natural resources being a significant factor for the territorial dispute, it is also worth highlighting that, according to ‘ABC’, it was the fact Germany had iron and hard coal and Poland did not have these what would make the Upper Silesian Jews vote for Germany in the plebiscite, because access to these resources could guarantee them a better business-related future<sup>610</sup>.

A different economic dimension of the Upper Silesian conflict was highlighted by ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’ when the newspaper’s editors mentioned the economic treatment by Germany of Upper Silesian workers as a reason why these would want to support the transfer of the region from Germany to the new Polish state. The editors also stated Germany’s policy in Upper Silesia was not democratic because it favoured monopolies and latifundium, and added: “Silesian workers don’t have many reasons to have gratitude towards Germany, because while in other regions the miners earn 10 and 12 marks, in Upper Silesia salaries don’t go beyond 7 marks”<sup>611</sup>. No other reference to this argument has been found either in the examined Spanish sources or in the consulted scientific literature.

### **Geopolitical aspects of the Upper Silesian dispute**

Geopolitical aspects related to the Upper Silesian conflict are also covered in the examined Spanish sources but are barely covered in their works by the three consulted Polish

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<sup>609</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 12-13.

<sup>610</sup> “La situación internacional”, ‘ABC’, 11.12.1919, p. 6.

<sup>611</sup> “Los problemas internacionales, el plebiscito de Alta Silesia”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 23.03.1921, p. 1.

historians, Kaczmarek, Jędruszczak and Dobrzycki. A worth-highlighting reference to these aspects in these authors' works on the Upper Silesian question is, for instance, Jędruszczak's statement that the decision by the Entente to organize a plebiscite in Upper Silesia gave strength to the "weakened by the war defeat and revolution" German Imperialism<sup>612</sup>. Under this interpretation the plebiscite was a better deal for Germany than for Poland.

Looking at geopolitical aspects in relation to the Upper Silesian conflict, as seen by Spanish press commentators and correspondents, one would say the Great War between Germany and the Allies had not finished completely, or the main actors in the European geopolitical theatre expected it to be resumed any time, peace not being yet a consolidated reality. In addition, one would say the Allies and Powers in general were aware that Poland played an important geopolitical and strategic role, and whether Poland would control or not, or to what extent it would control Upper Silesia, would determine what this role would be. In relation to this, it is also worth highlighting that both 'La Correspondencia de España's Alberto Insúa<sup>613</sup>, La *Época's* Mariano Marfil<sup>614</sup>, as well as 'ABC's Sofía Casanova<sup>615</sup>, in their comments on the Upper Silesian conflict also focused on strategic reasons as a key reason for Upper Silesia's great significance for Poland. Namely, on 'La *Época's* Mariano Marfil argued that if Upper Silesia was given to Poland, this state would become "a strong continent power, capable of opposing a barrier to German eastern expansion"<sup>616</sup>. Therefore, it can be stated that he described what would Poland's geopolitical role be after taking Upper Silesia. Meanwhile, Casanova referred to the significance of Upper Silesia also from a geopolitical or strategic point of view, because due to the region's triangle shape, inserted between Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia, it could be easily invaded by the Czechs and this would lead to a "conflagration"<sup>617</sup>. Meanwhile, 'La Correspondencia de España's Insúa explained he often read in the German press that Germany would ultimately lose the war when it would lose Upper Silesia and that Germany, if were not by Upper Silesia's contribution, would have stopped the war in 1916. He argued that Upper Silesia being given to Poland would mean the end of German militarism, the consolidation of peace and something in the best interest of the world and

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<sup>612</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919, 1920, 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>613</sup> "En torno al tratado, el alegato de Brockdorff (de nuestro redactor en París)", 'La Correspondencia de España', 5.06.1919, p. 1.

<sup>614</sup> "Vida exterior, el plebiscito de la Alta Silesia", 'La *Época*', 21.03.1921, p. 1.

<sup>615</sup> "El plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 25.01.1921, p. 3.

<sup>616</sup> "Vida exterior, el plebiscito de la Alta Silesia", 'La *Época*', 21.03.1921, p. 1.

<sup>617</sup> "El plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 25.01.1921, p. 3.

Europe<sup>618</sup>. In addition, Insúa, from another geopolitical angle, argued “Silesia has been and is an area of German invasion. If for the general interest of humanity it is convenient that Poland resurrects entirely, and a big Poland is the only obstacle against Russia’s Germanization, why the Western statesmen that are remaking Europe have to doubt between the world’s general interest and the particular conveniences of Germany?[...]” and added “the international policy of the Western democracy demands from now on the complete restauration of Poland”<sup>619</sup>. So, in other words, Insúa could not understand that there were political leaders in the Allies that were not convinced about strengthening Poland with Upper Silesia when it was clear this was in Europe’s best interest. Insúa also claimed that such a restauration along with the new nations created in northern and southern Eastern Europe after the Great War would isolate both Russia and Germany and avoid a German-Russian alliance that could lead to a “second universal war”. In addition, he argued Silesia made Germany more powerful than Poland and Czechoslovakia and referred to Silesia as Germany’s “eastern march”. In his view, Germany still wanted to expand in Slavic lands because of being unable to do so in the seas, and having a strong Poland with Silesia was the key to reinforce Eastern Europe from the Baltic to the Black Sea, at least from the Western Allies’ perspective<sup>620</sup>. Precisely, regarding Germany’s expansionist ambitions and European geopolitical balance after the Great War, ‘La Época’’s Mariano Marfil also expressed his views on a press article. Not only he believed the Upper Silesian question “is a vital question for the European balance, for the economic reconstruction of the Old Continent and for many other post-war problems”, but also he stated that “the orientation of European politics in the future will depend on the plebiscite result” and added that what was at stake in Upper Silesia for Germany, in his view, was either becoming great or becoming a “second-rank power”. He also argued that if Upper Silesia was assigned to Germany, due to Germany being the main coal power in the continent and being neighboured in the east by smaller nations, Germany would try to grow as an Empire, eastwards<sup>621</sup>.

### **The influence of the Polish-Soviet War**

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<sup>618</sup> “Los obstáculos de la paz, en Alta Silesia (de nuestro redactor en París)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 23.10.1920, p. 1.

<sup>619</sup> “En torno al tratado, el alegato de Brockdorff (de nuestro redactor en París)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 5.06.1919, p.1. Original quoted text: “Silesia ha sido y es una zona de invasión alemana. Si al interés general de la Humanidad le conviene que Polonia resucita enteramente- y una Polonia grande es el único obstáculo contra la germanización de Rusia- ¿Por qué han de titubear los estadistas occidentales que están rehaciendo Europa entre el interés general del Mundo y las conveniencias particularísimas de Alemania?”

<sup>620</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>621</sup> “Vida exterior. El plebiscito de la Alta Silesia”, ‘La Época’, 21.03.1921, p. 1.

The Upper Silesian conflict was influenced, particularly in 1920, by the ongoing Polish-Soviet War that left the new Polish state in a weak unstable situation and for a few weeks endangered its very existence. Germany and local German Upper Silesians tried to use this to their favour. In relation to this, it is worth commenting that on January 22, 1921, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw, Agüera, stated that Germany tried to cause a revolution in Poland due to the German interest in not losing Upper Silesia<sup>622</sup>. Agüera's claim, if true, would have made sense, since a Poland under social unrest and threatened by a Bolshevik-like uprising would not be in a situation to defend its interests in the Upper Silesia dispute. If in scientific literature we look for references to this German attempt to induce a revolution in Poland having in mind the Upper Silesian question, we see that this thread is not mentioned either by Jędruszczak, or Kaczmarek or Dobrzycki<sup>623</sup>.

### **France's role in the conflict**

As it often occurred in relation to comments on all the territorial conflicts generated by the creation of the new Polish state, one of the most often deeply analysed topics in the examined Spanish press sources, not only in general during the first years of the new state but also in the context of the Upper Silesian question, was the attitude and role of the Western powers towards the Upper Silesian conflict and plebiscite, and especially the role of France, Poland's main ally at the time. Political, geopolitical and economic reasons for France's support of Poland's interests in Upper Silesia were mentioned by Spanish press commentators and correspondents. For instance, the geopolitical motivations for France's stand with Poland in this dispute were explained by 'La Correspondencia de España's' correspondent in Paris Alberto Insúa, who claimed that the French leaders believed that a strong Poland was "the counterweight of the West in Central Europe and a solid warranty for peace"<sup>624</sup>. The economic reasons for France's interest in Upper Silesia being part of Poland, Sofía Casanova explained in January 1921, were mainly the fact France did not want Germany to control the coal

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<sup>622</sup> AHN, H1681, política 7, 22.01.1921. Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor, Marquis of Lema.

<sup>623</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921 Nieznana Wojna Polsko-Niemiecka*, Kraków 2019; T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, Katowice 1959; W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, Warszawa 1971.

<sup>624</sup> "Los obstáculos de la paz, en Alta Silesia (de nuestro redactor en París)", 'La Correspondencia de España', 23.10.1920, p. 1.

exploitations in the disputed region and the Western European country already controlled most of oil production in Poland<sup>625</sup>, from what it can be inferred Casanova claimed France would also want to control Upper Silesia's coal. On the Polish side, French support was also very important from an economic point of view due to Poland's financial problems, as 'El Imparcial' 's correspondent in Paris Ciges Aparicio explained<sup>626</sup>. Finally, the political or diplomatic reasons for France's support of Poland in the Upper Silesian question, from the Spanish press perspective, were, on the one hand, Poland's need to get another country to defend it and to protect its territorial ambitions, Aparicio also explained<sup>627</sup> and, on the other hand, France's willingness to hear Poland's complaints, due to France's "patriotic interest" and "seductive impressionability", as Casanova stated<sup>628</sup>. All in all, as Marfil claimed, for the Entente the plebiscite was truly important<sup>629</sup>.

### **The League of Nations and the Upper Silesian conflict**

Regarding third parties' role in the Upper Silesian dispute, it is also worth noting that Spanish writer based in Poland Sofía Casanova often referred to the League of Nations in relation to the Upper Silesian plebiscite during the examined period. In addition, it is also worth mentioning that on January 1, 1921, 'ABC' 's correspondent in Berlin Javier Bueno also referred to the League of Nations, indirectly, when he claimed that Poland was doing a pause in its military actions, motivated by territorial ambitions, with the goal of obtaining not only Gdańsk and Vilna, but also a part of Upper Silesia, by placing the three territorial conflicts in the same context<sup>630</sup>. In fact, these references to the Upper Silesian conflict in relation to the League of Nations did not make much sense since the new supranational organization did not play any role in the conflict until March 1921 and the Entente was the one responsible to resolve the question as per the Treaty of Versailles, and by means of the Interallied Commission.

In relation to the previous point, many examined Spanish sources commenting the actions and decisions of the Interallied Commission sent by the Entente to the disputed plebiscitary region are also found. One must claim it is inferred from the Spanish sources that neither Poles nor Germans were satisfied with the role, actions and decisions of the Interallied

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<sup>625</sup> "El plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 25.01.1921, p. 3.

<sup>626</sup> "Pilsudski en París, la alianza entre Francia y Polonia", 'El Imparcial', 9.02.1921, p. 1.

<sup>627</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>628</sup> "El plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 25.01.1921, p. 4.

<sup>629</sup> "Vida exterior. El plebiscito de la Alta Silesia", 'La Época', 21.03.1921, p. 1.

<sup>630</sup> "La post-guerra en 1920", 'ABC', 1.01.1921, p. 9.

Commission regarding Upper Silesia. In fact, according to 'El Sol's' correspondent in Germany Álvarez del Vayo, this German negative attitude of distrust towards the Commission increased over time<sup>631</sup>. In regard to foreign intervention in the Upper Silesian question, it is also worth adding that on December 6, 1920, the conservative newspaper 'La Acción' also claimed Poles were using money to try to win the plebiscite but the origin of the funds was unknown and probably was not Warsaw, since the Polish government went through a financial crisis<sup>632</sup>. No references to such money expenditures to win votes have been found in the examined scientific literature.

### **Echoes of the Silesian Uprisings in Spain**

Not many references are found to the First and Second Silesian Uprisings in the selected and examined Spanish primary sources. What is more, there are no references to the uprisings by means of the word "uprising" as such on the examined Spanish press sources. It must be noted, however, that the third uprising and the final territorial division of the region between Germany and Poland is not covered in this dissertation, because the closure of the research period in this work is precisely the Upper Silesian plebiscite on March 20, 1921 along with the signature of the Treaty of Riga on March 18, 1921 and the approval of the Polish Constitution on March 17, 1921.

What is very telling about the lack of interest in the uprisings among Spanish diplomats and Spanish press commentators and correspondents, is to mention that there are no references in the examined Spain's diplomatic and press sources to the August 20, 1920 general strike that led to the beginning of the Second Silesian Uprising<sup>633</sup>. It is worth mentioning at this point that Polish historian Dobrzycki claims that the second Silesian Uprising's main goal conceived by the POW (Polish military organization) leaders was to unarm the *Sicherheitspolizei* (the so-called *sipo*) and replace it by the so-called Polish Citizen Guards<sup>634</sup>.

### **Atrocities during the Upper Silesian conflict**

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<sup>631</sup> "Por telegrafía sin hilos, el problema de Alta Silesia (de nuestro redactor corresponsal)", 'El Sol', 28.01.1920, p. 1.

<sup>632</sup> "Boletín diario de política extranjera, El problema de la Alta Silesia", 'La Acción', 6.12.1920, p. 2.

<sup>633</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, op. cit., p. 43; R. Kaczmarek, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921 Nieznana Wojna polsko-niemiecka*, op. cit., p. 301.

<sup>634</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, op. cit., p. 83.

On to another aspect of the conflict, it is a documented fact that crimes and atrocities in were committed both by Poles and Germans in Upper Silesia, although not with the same frequency and severity, during the uprisings and throughout the whole period of the Upper Silesian dispute, mainly from 1919 to 1921. This is the reality one should keep in mind if one believes in the veracity of the Spanish press sources, although these were also very influenced by propaganda efforts. As it could be expected, pro-allied newspapers highlighted the crimes committed by Germans, and Germanophile newspapers highlighted the crimes committed by Poles. Not only Spanish press contributors referred to the violence in the context of the German-Polish dispute but also Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera reported about it: on August 21, 1920 from Poznań (due to the diplomatic corps evacuation from Warsaw because of the Battle of Warsaw and the resulting threat of Bolshevik invasion of the capital) the Spanish diplomat reported to state minister that both in Upper Silesia and in Gdańsk in the previous weeks there were serious incidents generated by a feared "German attitude" in the disputed areas with Poland since the moment Bolsheviks advanced into Poland. Firstly, Agüera reported on what happened in Upper Silesia: "bloody attacks against French and Poles in Katowice". According to the Spanish diplomat, all started when allied troops were moved from Cieszyn Silesia to Upper Silesia and German local newspapers reported these troops would be sent to fight the Bolsheviks. Then, Agüera explained, pro-German plebiscite organizations and armed groups "decided to take advantage of this occasion to start their move, prepared already long ago, against French and Poles"<sup>635</sup>. In relation to these events, Dobrzycki explains that:

"at the beginning of August the first divisions of the new contingents of French armies [coming from Cieszyn Silesia] started entering in Upper Silesia. This generated an immediate opposition by the Germans. Also, Silesian workers and railway workers, who thought these divisions had to be used in the fight against the Red Army, many times didn't want to allow the military transport"<sup>636</sup>.

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<sup>635</sup> AHN, H1681, política 110, 21.08.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor (Marquis of Lema).

<sup>636</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, p.79. Original quoted text: "na początku sierpnia pierwsze oddziały nowych kontyngentów wojsk francuskich zaczęły napływać na Górny Śląsk. Wywołało to gwałtowny sprzeciw Niemców. Również robotnicy śląscy i kolejarze, którzy sądzili, że oddziały te mają być użyte do walki z Armią Czerwoną niejednokrotnie nie chcieli przepuszczać transportów wojskowych".

Dobrzycki adds “nationalist German organizations took advantage of this to strengthen their attacks on French and Poles”<sup>637</sup>. Agüera added that, with its messages to workers, the Polish plebiscite commission avoided the general strike the pro-German organizations intended to organize but incidents took place anyway. In his report, Agüera also referred to the demonstration and attack on the allied mission building in Katowice by the *Sicherheitswehr* with a battle between that German organization and the French cavalry units, that denied the former’s request to disarm the French, what resulted in death casualties on both sides<sup>638</sup>. When checking the events reported by Agüera in Polish scientific literature we see that Wiesław Dobrzycki explains that on August 18, 1920:

“militias attacked the hotel Deutches Hauss in Katowice, the headquarters of the Polish district plebiscite committee, which was almost devastated. Later Polish warehouses, deposits and stores in town were destroyed, and next a true hunting of those Poles known by their nationalist convictions was started”<sup>639</sup>.

This author also explains that on August 16 German crowds gathered in front of the Interallied Plebiscite Commission in Katowice’s Warsaw street and sang in favour of Germany and against France and Poland, despite being faced by French units. Dobrzycki also refers to the fact that later dr. Mielęcki, who lived in front, was murdered by these<sup>640</sup>. Jędruszczak briefly refers to these two incidents, the attack to the Polish committee and the murder of Andrzej Mielęcki<sup>641</sup>. Meanwhile, German historian Böhler explains that on August 17 “a German demonstration in favour of neutrality” in the Polish-Soviet war turned into “riots” that led to demonstrators killing Poles and French soldiers killing demonstrators<sup>642</sup>. It must be immediately noted that the bloody events Dobrzycki places on August 16 and Böhler places on August 17 are the same. The most important point to highlight here is that Dobrzycki explains these German actions against Poles (not only the ones in Katowice mentioned above) made that

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<sup>637</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “wykorzystały to nacjonalistyczne organizacje niemieckie do nasilenia ataków na Francuzów i Polaków”.

<sup>638</sup> AHN, H1681, política 110, 21.08.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O’Lawlor, Marquis of Lema.

<sup>639</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 80. Original quoted text: „bojówki napadły na hotel „Deutsches Haus” w Katowicach, siedzibę polskiego powiatowego komitetu plebiscytowego, który doszczętnie niemal zdewastowano. Później zniszczono polskie składy, magazyny i sklepy w mieście, a następnie rozpoczęto prawdziwe polowanie na znanych ze swych przekonań narodowych Polaków”.

<sup>640</sup> *Ibidem*, p.79-80.

<sup>641</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

<sup>642</sup> J. Böhler, *Wojna Domowa. Nowe Spojrzenie na Odrodzenie Polski*, *op. cit.*, p.155-156. Original quoted words: „niemiecka manifestacja na rzecz neutralności”.



Poles started creating their own defence organizations, what led to the second Silesian uprising<sup>643</sup>.

Among the comments in the press on violence resulting from this territorial dispute, one must highlight that on October 23, 1920, from Paris, 'La Correspondencia de España's Alberto Insúa described with plenty of details the violence episodes taking place in the disputed region, and, by fetching the Treaty of Versailles, the correspondent explained to his readers that:

“the article 88 of the Peace Treaty, in its 1st paragraph establishes that “ all the military and semi military societies created in this area by the inhabitants of the very same region will be dissolved immediately and the members of these societies whose residences are not registered in such region must evacuate it”<sup>644</sup>.

Next, Insúa commented that Germans did not comply with this article of the treaty and avoided the work of the Interallied Commission, because “in Upper Silesia secret societies made of ex-army men which, in their majority, come from German countries away from the plebiscite area, multiply and grow in number”. Insúa added that a friend of his, who was an expert on international affairs and had travelled around the centre of the continent, and whose name he did not reveal, explained to him that the first thing the Germans did was to create numerous German associations that were allegedly legal but that over time became “anti-plebiscite action” groups. He mentioned as the “most dangerous” German society of this kind was “the League of ex-prisoners, whose central venue is found in Breslau”. Insúa explained that these former prisoners from the Upper Silesia region, upon return from England or France, were well treated and enrolled in the League, and they advocated Germanization of the disputed territory, and did so by means of violence. Insúa also explained that on May 3, 1920 Poles organized “patriotic parties” and were attacked by armed Germans. He claimed that his friend informed him that the German government supported these violent groups and highlighted that Germany had sent Klaus Gumprecht to the region to check the actions of the Interallied Commission and to organize assault troops. The Spanish journalist precisely reported that on May 20, 1920 the German assault troops attacked the Polish Plebiscite Commission offices, what led to casualties. He stated with irony “this is another show of the civic and pacific character of Upper Silesian German associations”. He argued these well-armed numerous

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<sup>643</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

<sup>644</sup> “Los obstáculos de la paz, en Alta Silesia (de nuestro redactor en París)”, 'La Correspondencia de España', 23.10.1920, p. 1. Original quoted text: “El artículo 88 del Tratado de Paz, en su párrafo 1º establece “que todas las sociedades militare y semimilitares formadas en dicha zona por los habitantes de la misma región serán disueltas inmediatamente”, y que los miembros de esas Sociedades no domiciliados en dicha zona deberían evacuarla”.

German associations that had secret weapon warehouses could cause a significant conflict. In addition, Insúa argued, by citing a September 1916 report by Opole's industrialists to the German chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg, that the reason for these armed actions was the high significance of Upper Silesia's industry in Germany's defence, because it was seen that Western German industry was unable to supply the German army with enough weapons during the Great War<sup>645</sup>.

Historian Ryszard Kaczmarek explains that on May 25, [not on May 20 as Alberto Insúa reported] the building of the Polish commissariat in Bytom was twice entered, the second time successfully, by a German crowd, which destroyed and burned the building, from where Poles shot as a reaction. The incident caused 3 deaths<sup>646</sup>. Dobrzycki, meanwhile, calendar-wise places "the big attack on the Polish plebiscite in Bytom" on May 27 [not on May 25 or May 20] and explains that the attacking crowd was made up of German guerrilla men and soldiers dressed like civilians and was finally repelled by French soldiers<sup>647</sup>. Dobrzycki also explains that the Polish plebiscite commissariat was headquartered in the Lomnitz Hotel in Bytom and was first led by Wojciech Korfanty since February 1920 and included 1000 people in the moment it was most developed. He adds that additional district committees were created in different towns of Upper Silesia<sup>648</sup>.

However, Spaniards reading 'ABC' would learn that attacks on Poles as a result of the Polish-German conflict over Upper Silesia took place not only in Upper Silesia, but also in Lower Silesia, within undisputed German territory. Namely, on August 28, 1920 'ABC' included a telegraphic press note from Berlin issued on August 27, which the newspaper headlined "The Polish invasion has impacts in Breslau". On the note it was reported that, according to information received by the 'Voss Zeitung' from Breslau, after some words spread in that city about the Polish army having taken Upper Silesia and committing atrocities against local Germans, a crowd attacked the Polish consulate in Breslau destroying everything they found and then went to the hotel where the Interallied Commission members were staying, next attacking the commission offices and later even the French consulate. The note highlighted the "demonstrators" destroyed or burned all the documentation they came across and even burned the cars of the French consulate<sup>649</sup>. It can be checked that these attacks, in fact, took place on

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<sup>645</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>646</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921 Nieznana Wojna Polsko-Niemiecka, op. cit.*, p. 282.

<sup>647</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921, op. cit.*, p. 74-75.

<sup>648</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 67-68.

<sup>649</sup> "La invasión polaca repercute en Breslau", 'ABC', 28.08.1920, p. 15.

August 26, 1920<sup>650</sup>. What is worth commenting here is that ‘ABC’ used the wording “Polish invasion” in reference to the situation in Upper Silesia, when the Polish uprising in Upper Silesia had already finished on August 25 and there was no such thing as a Polish invasion of the disputed region, so, in a way, ‘ABC’ gave visibility to the invasion rumours spread in Breslau which the press note published on the newspaper referred to.

As aforementioned, it must also be highlighted that the Spanish press also denounced Polish crimes in the plebiscite area in late 1920 and early 1921. Germanophile newspapers, namely ‘ABC’ and ‘La Acción’ highlighted the “terror” actions by Poles addressed against the local Germans<sup>651</sup>. On the contrary, in the consulted scientific literature, neither Dobrzycki nor Jedruszack refer to the atrocities committed by Poles in Upper Silesia at all<sup>652</sup>. As a matter of fact, among the consulted scholarship, only Kaczmarek does refer to attacks committed by Poles against the *Sipo* but does not give any details, only mentioning an attempt by a group of Poles to beat *Sipo* officers during a wedding, a situation that ended pacifically<sup>653</sup>. However, German historian Böhler refers to these atrocities, as it is further explained below<sup>654</sup>.

When commenting the references in the Spanish press to Polish-originated violence in the region, it must be explained first that on December 6, 1920 Germanophile pro-Catholic newspaper ‘La Acción’ stated that, in order to prepare the plebiscite, Poles “unleashed all their bad passions” by means of “terror, attacks and persecutions” in order to make pressure and chase the German population in the region. The newspaper also claimed that in Upper Silesia Poles expelled the local Catholic priests of German nationality that were opposed to the Polishness of the region<sup>655</sup>. Secondly, it must be mentioned that on January 30, 1921 ‘ABC’ dedicated its ‘Boletín del Día’ to Polish violence in Upper Silesia. The Spanish newspaper stated “Poles make terror”, and added that Polish soldiers “disguised as peasants and workers set in fire and looted factories and Germans’ houses” and also reported Poles made terrorist attacks in mines, urban and rural areas “to frighten the inhabitants of the regions that are under dispute to prevent them from voting freely”. The conservative newspaper wrote that references

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<sup>650</sup> “22 MAJA Cząstka Polski w Breslau, czyli o Konsulacie RP” , ‘Centrum Historii Zajezdnia’, <https://www.zajezdnia.org/uploads/media/default/0001/08/4b4ae82358971c946183bfc9860e1ea6f665fbdd.pdf> [consulted on 28.11.2022].

<sup>651</sup> “Boletín del día, el plebiscito en Alta Silesia”, ‘ABC’, 30.01.1921, p.17; “De interés mundial. Boletín diario de política extranjera. El problema de la Alta Silesia”, ‘La Acción’, 6.12.1920, p. 2.

<sup>652</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921 Nieznana Wojna Polsko-Niemiecka*, op. cit.; T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, op. cit.; W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, op. cit.

<sup>653</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921 Nieznana Wojna Polsko-Niemiecka*, op. cit., p. 244.

<sup>654</sup> J. Böhler, *Wojna Domowa, Nowe Spojrzenie na Odrodzenie Polski*, op. cit., p.156-157

<sup>655</sup> “De interés mundial. Boletín diario de política extranjera. El problema de la Alta Silesia”, ‘La Acción’, 6.12.1920, p. 2.

to these incidents were included in a report by the Geneva International [Labor] Office. ‘ABC’ also added that “Poles in the disputed regions, like those in Poznań, already miss the German exploitation methods, and Prussia’s administration, and they are the first who fear Poland’s victory, thanks to its terror procedures and the decided favour made by the Entente in order for her to win the plebiscite” and explicitly mentioned “Polish terrorism”, to which Germans were not yielding, in the view of the newspaper’s editors<sup>656</sup>. Thirdly, the same newspaper, ‘ABC’, claimed, a few weeks later, on March 20, 1921 that Poles generated terror and had armed groups in the region. ‘ABC’ added that Poles relied on “the secret or public help by the Entente’s soldiers” as well<sup>657</sup>.

In addition, there was also an indirect mention of Polish violence in Upper Silesia in one of the pro-allied Spanish newspapers, ‘El Sol’, when on January 28, 1920, the newspaper’s correspondent in Berlin, Julio Álvarez del Vayo published an article about Upper Silesia *via* telegram—therefore likely written on the same day—explaining in his text, that former German minister Georg Gothein told him that the French should not have been sent as members of the Interallied Commission because these were too supportive of the Poles and protected Poles involved in “looting and riots”<sup>658</sup>.

German historian Jochen Böhler explains that during the last nine months before the plebiscite, especially after the Second Silesian Uprising, violence from both sides increased in the disputed region. This violence, the author explains, was performed by secret paramilitary groups supported by the intelligence services and without official support from both governments, and he adds that in the German case these paramilitary groups were under the *Selbstschutz Oberschlesien* (Upper Silesian self-defence). Böhler, without giving further details, clarifies that: “local assault troops from both sides were tasked with protecting their population, intimidating enemy activists, making forays under cover at night, eliminating traitors, spreading terror and generally demonstrating their advantage in order to influence the results of the plebiscite”<sup>659</sup>. The Polish actions of terror in the disputed region listed by ‘ABC’<sup>660</sup> correspond to the types of actions listed by Böhler, but it is difficult to determine

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<sup>656</sup> “Boletín del día, el plebiscito en Alta Silesia”, ‘ABC’, 30.01.1921, p. 17.

<sup>657</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>658</sup> “El problema de Alta Silesia”, ‘El Sol’, 28.01.1920, p. 1.

<sup>659</sup> J. Böhler, *Wojna Domowa, Nowe Spojrzenie na Odrodzenie Polski op. cit.*, p. 156-157. Original quoted text: „Miejscowe oddziały szturmowe obu stron miały za zadanie chronić swoją ludność, zastraszać działaczy przeciwnika, dokonywać wypadów pod osłoną nocy, likwidować zdrajców, siać terror i ogólnie demonstrować swoją przewagę, aby korzystnie wpłynąć na wynik plebiscytu“.

<sup>660</sup> “Boletín del día, el plebiscito en Alta Silesia”, ‘ABC’, 30.01.1921, p. 17.

whether these were exaggerated or not by the Spanish newspaper or by the sources the newspapers' editors relied on.

## **The plebiscite**

Entering now the analysis of Spanish views on the Upper Silesian plebiscite, it must firstly be noted that differences are seen between, on the one hand, those newspapers or press contributors who were in favour of a plebiscite in the disputed region, or, at least, saw it as something logical or appropriate to solve the question, and, on the other hand, those who were opposed to the plebiscite. Among the latter, however, not all of them believed that Upper Silesia should belong to Germany. On "La Correspondencia de España", Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda argued a plebiscite was not needed because the region's Polishness was unquestionable<sup>661</sup>. 'El Imparcial' was also against the plebiscite and not because of a pro-German stand on the question. The newspaper argued that a final resolution for the dispute based on voting in each of the plebiscite region districts, as the one the Entente intended to use, was to be a source of conflicts. The newspaper's editors went further with their criticism of the plebiscite and stated the plebiscite was to become just one procedure instead of a solution for the dispute<sup>662</sup>. In connection with this, on April 22, 1920 'ABC' wondered if the plebiscite would give an "ultimate" solution to the region's political future<sup>663</sup>.

## **Predictions on the plebiscite results**

A few references are also found in the examined Spanish sources, both in the press and diplomatic correspondence, to predictions about the Upper Silesian plebiscite results. A similar number of predictions inclined towards a German victory as of those inclined towards a Polish victory are seen in the examined Spanish sources. Whereas on March 21, 1921 'La Época' published Mariano Marfil's predictions regarding the plebiscite, written just before its result

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<sup>661</sup> "Polonia y la Alta Silesia", 'La Correspondencia de España', 22.06.1919, p. 1.

<sup>662</sup> "Después del plebiscito. La Alta Silesia", 'El Imparcial', 23.03.1921, p. 2.

<sup>663</sup> "Boletín del día. Los plebiscitos", 'ABC', 22.04.1920, p. 13.

was known, and which didn't focus on predicting which country would win it, but, instead, on what was at stake for Germany, which in his view was to become great or becoming a "second-rank power"<sup>664</sup>, other newspapers had made a clear prediction. 'ABC'—despite a month earlier having stated that it was difficult to make a prediction—predicted Germany would win the plebiscite in regular unconstrained circumstances<sup>665</sup>. 'El Sol' published the opinion communicated to their correspondent Álvarez del Vayo by former German minister Gotheim—not necessarily corresponding to the newspaper's or the correspondent's own opinion in principle, and similar to that expressed by 'ABC'—that in normal circumstances Germany would win the plebiscite but Poles made propaganda by means of unfulfillable (due to the country's economic situation) promises and this might have an impact on the voting result<sup>666</sup>. Meanwhile, Germanophile newspaper 'La Acción' reckoned that the plebiscite's result would depend on the Interallied Commission's actions<sup>667</sup>. A Polish victory in the plebiscite was forecasted by the Spanish press commentators that better knew the Polish reality, Sofía Casanova and Casimiro Granzów. While on December 10, 1920, 'ABC's Sofía Casanova believed there would be more votes in the plebiscite for Poland than for Germany, but that in the end Germany and England would reach an agreement to conduct a "scam" and remove Upper Silesia from Poland<sup>668</sup>, on 'La Correspondencia de España', Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda predicted that Upper Silesia, or "Oder Silesia" as he called the region, would become Polish again as a result of the plebiscite<sup>669</sup>. It is also worth underlining that way before the plebiscite took place, in December 1919, 'ABC' referred to predictions of voting trends comparing urban centres with rural areas. Concretely, the editors' text claimed that Poland believed in its victory in the plebiscite because it relied on "the countryside population" whereas Germany was in a better plebiscite-wise situation than Poland in the Silesian cities<sup>670</sup>. It can be interpreted that the first statement referred to how Poles saw their performance in the plebiscite whereas the second one referred to the editor's own interpretation of Germany voters' trends.

### **The plebiscite's date**

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<sup>664</sup> "Vida exterior, el plebiscito de la Alta Silesia", 'La Época', 21.03.1921, p. 1.

<sup>665</sup> "Boletín del día. Los plebiscitos". 'ABC', 22.04.1922, p. 13.

<sup>666</sup> "Por telegrafía sin hilos, el problema de Alta Silesia (de nuestro redactor corresponsal)", 'El Sol', 28.01.1921.

<sup>667</sup> "De interés mundial. Boletín diario de política extranjera. El problema de la Alta Silesia", 'La Acción', 6.12.1920, p. 2.

<sup>668</sup> "Intervalo de paz sin paz", 'ABC', 10.12.1920, p. 3.

<sup>669</sup> "Desde Polonia. La Leyenda de Silesia. De nuestro redactor especial", 'La Correspondencia de España', 4.01.1921, p. 1.

<sup>670</sup> "La situación internacional", 'ABC', 11.12.1919, p. 6.

The date of the plebiscite was another question that the Spanish press commentators analysed and regarded as meaningful. By the end of 1919, 'ABC's editors believed that the later the plebiscite would take place the worse for Poland its result would be. The newspaper argued this was due to the fact that Silesian Poles started being more pro-German after seeing how Poles in Poznań were disappointed with their new Polish administration, which they regarded as worse than the previous German one<sup>671</sup>. Polish historian Dobrzycki explains that this same phenomenon regarding the plebiscite calendar happened after the August 1920 2nd Silesian Uprising, which increased Polish chances to win the plebiscite<sup>672</sup>. According to Dobrzycki, this is why Poles were keen on the earliest possible plebiscite date after the uprising, but since Great Britain did not want a Polish victory that would make France stronger, it pressured to postpone the plebiscite until the moment when the effects of German activism and propaganda would allow Germany to win the plebiscite. As a result, the plebiscite was set for 20 March 1921<sup>673</sup>. It is worth adding that regarding the postponing of the plebiscite date, Casanova claimed the change of date increased the tensions between Germans and Poles in the disputed region and also increased tensions among many nations regarding the role of the League of Nations and its justice-implementing system<sup>674</sup>.

Onto this question, it is worth mentioning that on December 11, 1919 'ABC' claimed that Silesian Poles started to change their view in favour of belonging to Germany and if the plebiscite had taken place just after the November 11, 1918 armistice, all Poles would have voted for Poland but Silesian Poles started changing their minds after learning what had happened in the Poznań region, meaning worse Polish administration than the previous German one and Poznań Poles being disappointed because of this<sup>675</sup>.

### **The German migrants' votes in the plebiscite**

The question of German Silesian migrants voting in the plebiscite was also very well reflected in the Spanish press and was perceived as significant by Spanish press commentators. 'ABC' explained Poles feared that the arrival of Germans from other regions to Silesia to vote

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<sup>671</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>672</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>673</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>674</sup> "El plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 25.01.1921, p. 3-4.

<sup>675</sup> "La situación internacional", 'ABC', 11.12.1919, p. 6.

would encourage the resident German Silesians to vote. In addition, 'ABC' stated that 150.000 German Silesians living outside the region would travel to Upper Silesia on purpose to vote in the plebiscite. 'ABC' added Poles in the region, as well as Polish troops in the border, would not be able to prevent so many Germans from voting<sup>676</sup>. Dobrzycki explains that France supported Poland on its effort to avoid that any German born in the region could vote in the plebiscite, but Italy and Great Britain opposed Poland's intention<sup>677</sup>.

While in December 1919 'ABC' had argued that all Silesian Germans would be present in the region during the plebiscite<sup>678</sup>, over a year later, on February 27, 1921, the conservative Germanophile newspaper made a more realistic forecast and estimated that 150000 Germans living outside the region would travel to Upper Silesia on purpose to vote in the plebiscite<sup>679</sup>. It must also be highlighted that although in February 1921 'ABC' stated that Poland, supported by France, had demanded from the Entente's Ambassadors' Council that the Silesians not residing in the disputed region vote later<sup>680</sup>, Dobrzycki explains that the leader of the Interallied Commission, general Henri Le Rond, proposed to place the voting of migrants later in the calendar, two weeks after the voting of the Upper Silesia residents. Dobrzycki in no moment says this was a Polish proposition, and attributes its authorship to Le Rond, but he also writes that this proposition was supported by Poland because this way the result of residents, without German Silesian migrants, would in the end have a more significant influence in the final result<sup>681</sup>. 'ABC' had explained to its readers that the Ambassadors' Council rejected the Polish demand, and Poles, because of that, were angry, and Poland's ambassador in London "threatened with his resignation"<sup>682</sup>, whereas Dobrzycki explains that Germany and Great Britain strongly opposed Le Rond's proposition and the same did Italy, so on February 21 1921 it was approved by the Council that both residents and migrants would vote on the same day<sup>683</sup>.

Just three days after the plebiscite, on March 23, 1921 pro-allied newspapers 'El Liberal' and 'El Heraldo de Madrid' highlighted that on the plebiscite day in Upper Silesia the Allies allowed more than 150.000 German migrants to vote in their Silesian hometowns<sup>684</sup>, a figure that corresponds exactly to the number of Silesian Germans living outside the region which

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<sup>676</sup> "Boletín del día. El Plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 27.02.1921, p. 11.

<sup>677</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>678</sup> "La situación internacional", 'ABC', 11.12.1919, p. 6.

<sup>679</sup> "Boletín del día. El Plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 27.02.1921, p. 11.

<sup>680</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>681</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>682</sup> "Boletín del día. El Plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 27.02.1921, p. 11.

<sup>683</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>684</sup> "El plebiscito de Alta Silesia y las reparaciones", 'El Heraldo de Madrid', 23.03.1921, p. 1.



would travel to Upper Silesia on purpose for the plebiscite, according to 'ABC's estimation on February 27, 1921<sup>685</sup>.

So, how many Silesian migrants overall and Silesian German migrants specifically voted in the Upper Silesian plebiscite? and what was their contribution to the plebiscite's result? In relation to these questions it can be interpreted that Dobrzycki understands Poland would have still lost the plebiscite but not that clearly if the migrant's votes had not been counted, specifying the result without migrant voting would have been 469376 votes (47.3%) for Poland and 524450 (52.7%) for Germany since he claims "the non-favourable for Poland result of the voting in a huge extent was influenced by the contribution of migrants"<sup>686</sup>. Therefore, according to Dobrzycki's data, around 11.000 Silesian migrants or non-residents voted for Poland, and many more, around 218.000, voted for Germany.

Jędruszczak argues that "migrants decided the serious majority of votes for Germany", and he also gives data of plebiscite votes after removing the migrant votes, as follows: 524.000 for Germany and 469.000 for Poland. These data correspond almost exactly to the figures given by Dobrzycki. This difference between votes for Poland and votes for Germany is regarded by Jędruszczak as "insignificant", so taking into account the fact that the difference was larger with total votes including migrant voting, he thinks the migrants' votes were decisive for the final result favourable to Germany<sup>687</sup>. Similarly, Dobrzycki sees the influence of the migrant voting as significant for the final plebiscite result, but he also claims that what was in fact unfavourable for Poland's control of Upper Silesia was the "Eastern orientation of the Polish state at that time"<sup>688</sup>. We can calculate that the migrant voting, according to Jędruszczak, was 10.000 for Poland and 218.00 for Germany.

## **The plebiscite results**

The plebiscite to decide the future of Upper Silesia took place on March 20, 1921, as expected. In regard to comments on its results in the Spanish press it is worth mentioning that whereas pro-Germanophile newspaper 'ABC' interpreted the plebiscite results as a great German victory, which was surprising for the newspaper's editors<sup>689</sup>, even though they had

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<sup>685</sup> "Boletín del día. El Plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 27.02.1921, p. 11.

<sup>686</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

<sup>687</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>688</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

<sup>689</sup> "Boletín del día. La Razón triunfa", 'ABC', 22.03.1921, p. 7.

predicted Germany would win<sup>690</sup>, 'El Imparcial' claimed that "the plebiscite fight was very equal"<sup>691</sup> and 'El Heraldo de Madrid' stated that Germany won in some districts and Poland in others but the total voting was won by Germany<sup>692</sup>. When it comes to specific figures of the results, on March 22, 1921 'ABC' claimed Germany obtained 75% of the votes<sup>693</sup> whereas 'El Sol's' Álvarez del Vayo reported a 61% and 63% on March 22 and 23 respectively, of the votes for Germany<sup>694</sup>. Böhler highlights that, as most researchers see it, the results of the plebiscite validly showed Upper Silesians' preference to be part of Germany given that there were 1,186,342 votes for that option and a participation of 98%<sup>695</sup>.

The plebiscite results given by Dobrzycki are: regarding communes attained, in 53.7% of the communes Germany won and in 46.3% of the communes Poland won, and in total votes 479414 for Poland and 706820 for Germany, what would mean, in percentage, which the author didn't calculate, around 40% of the votes for Poland and 60% of the votes for Germany<sup>696</sup>. Dobrzycki argues that the total Polish result in the plebiscite, with almost 480.000 votes for Poland, was a success given the circumstances in which the plebiscite took place<sup>697</sup>. The total voting numbers given by Jędruszczak are 706.000 votes for Germany (59.7%), 479.000 for Poland (40.3%)<sup>698</sup>. In addition, according to the figures given by Jędruszczak, Poland won in 682 communes, a 46.3% of the communes, whereas Germany won in 792, a 53.7%<sup>699</sup>. Last but not least, the plebiscite results presented by Kaczmarek are 707393 (59.4%) votes for Germany and 479365 (40.3%) votes for Poland, so, very similar to those given by Jędruszczak<sup>700</sup>.

An interesting analysis that can be made is to compare the actual results of the Upper Silesian plebiscite with the predictions that were made by Spanish press editors and contributors. Whereas 'ABC'<sup>701</sup> and 'La Acción'<sup>702</sup> editors correctly predicted Germany's

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<sup>690</sup> "Boletín del día. Los plebiscitos", 'ABC', 22.04.1922, p. 13.

<sup>691</sup> "Después del plebiscito. La Alta Silesia", 'El Imparcial', 23.03.1921, p. 1.

<sup>692</sup> "Los problemas internacionales. El plebiscito de Alta Silesia y las reparaciones", 'El Heraldo de Madrid', 23.03.1921, p. 1.

<sup>693</sup> "Boletín del día. La razón triunfa", 'ABC', 22.03.1921, p. 7.

<sup>694</sup> "Después del plebiscito, los alemanes se oponen al reparto de Alta Silesia", 'El Sol', 23.03. 1921, p. 5.

<sup>695</sup> J. Böhler, *Wojna Domowa. Nowe Spojrzenie na Odrodzenie Polski*, op. cit., p. 161.

<sup>696</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, op. cit., p. 102.

<sup>697</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 106.

<sup>698</sup> T. Jedruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, op. cit. p. 47.

<sup>699</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>700</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921 Nieznana Wojna Polsko-Niemiecka*, op. cit., p. 343.

<sup>701</sup> "Boletín del día. Los plebiscitos", 'ABC', 22.04.1922, p. 13.

<sup>702</sup> "De interés mundial. Boletín diario de política extranjera. El problema de la Alta Silesia", 'La Acción', 6.12.1920, p. 2.

victory in the Upper Silesian voting, both ‘ABC’'s correspondent Sofía Casanova<sup>703</sup> and ‘La Correspondencia de España’'s contributor Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda<sup>704</sup> were wrong when they predicted Poland would win the plebiscite. However, as it was seen later on, Granzów was not completely wrong when he predicted Upper Silesia would become part of Poland because of the plebiscite, since the Polish victory in some districts, along with the Third Silesian Uprising, eventually led to a diplomatic solution that in 1922 left a significant part of Upper Silesia in Polish hands.

‘ABC’ claimed the plebiscite’s result was surprising when considering the demographic reality of the region with more Poles than Germans and considering the actions taken by the Poles against the Germans under Le Rond’s protection<sup>705</sup>. It is also important to underline that both ‘ABC’ and ‘El Imparcial’ highlighted the fact that many non-Germans, meaning Poles and Jews, voted for Germany, and ‘ABC’ indicated this fact was a direct cause of the plebiscite’s result, generally speaking, being favourable to Germany<sup>706</sup>.

In relation to the Spanish press’s interpretation of the plebiscite results, it must be also highlighted that on March 23 1921 ‘El Liberal’ also referred to the Upper Silesian question, although mainly by means of foreign telegraphic press notes. More importantly, the newspaper also included a map of the plebiscite area and a description text in which it indicated in which districts Germany won the voting and in which others Poland won. However, the pro-allied newspaper did not feature its own comment on the plebiscite results<sup>707</sup>.

Jędruszczak claims that the plebiscite results were not a real display of the true national distribution of the Upper Silesian population and adds the Upper Silesians were not able to express their view with complete freedom since many Germans, including civil servants, the clergy and businessmen, pressured the Polish population in the region<sup>708</sup>. Holding the same view as Jędruszczak, Dobrzycki also claims the plebiscite did not take place in a situation dominated by freedom and normality that could allow the population to “express their will” due to “social and national” pressures<sup>709</sup>. Kaczmarek, meanwhile, does not go in that direction and places the emphasis on the role of the German migrants in the plebiscite results. According to this author this was significant, and Poland was not able to take advantage of it by means of its

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<sup>703</sup> “Intervalo de paz sin paz”, ‘ABC’, 10.12.1920, p. 3.

<sup>704</sup> “Desde Polonia. La Leyenda de Silesia. De nuestro redactor especial”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 4.01.192, p. 1.

<sup>705</sup> “Boletín del día. La razón triunfa”, ‘ABC’, 22.03.1921, p.7.

<sup>706</sup> *Ibidem*; “Después del plebiscito. La Alta Silesia”, ‘El Imparcial’, 23.03.1921, p. 2.

<sup>707</sup> “El plebiscito en Alta Silesia”, ‘El Liberal’, 23.03.1921, p. 1.

<sup>708</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>709</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921*, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

migrants in other parts of Germany<sup>710</sup>. It is important to highlight that none of the examined press sources included statements questioning the legitimacy or the conditions on which the plebiscite took place, although there were comments about the role played on it by German Silesian migrants.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be stated that both top Spanish diplomatic representative in Poland Gutiérrez de Agüera and most Spanish press commentators saw the Upper Silesian conflict as a clash between Poland and Germany to control a territory of great significance, both at an economic level, mostly due to its coal wealthiness, and at a strategic level, because this significance was caused by the Western Powers' economic interests in the region. Indeed, as in the case of most Polish questions analysed in this dissertation, Spain's press focus was often placed more on the Powers' stand on the territorial dispute question, than on the question itself. In fact, France's and England's roles in this conflict are discussed in many of the examined sources. In this case, Spanish press commentators and correspondents also considerably focused on the potential benefits for Germany and Poland of Upper Silesia's possession and the benefits for Upper Silesians to belong to one or other state.

Generally speaking, leaving aside Sofía Casanova on 'ABC', as it could be expected, Spanish press commentators and editors were in favour of Poland's possession of Upper Silesia if they wrote in a pro-allied newspaper and were against Poland's control over the region if they wrote in a Germanophile newspaper, although most examined sources recognized the Polish ethnographic predominance in the region. Most commentators in the examined Spanish press articles, in fact, focused on the plebiscite's organization, conditions, surrounding circumstances and results.

Last but not least, it is also worth highlighting that differences are seen across Spanish newspapers when it comes to the interpretation of the plebiscite's results and when it comes to the role of the plebiscite to solve the Upper Silesian question. Moreover, unanimity is not seen on the predictions about the future of the region in the Spanish press either before or after the plebiscite results being known.

## Spain and Danzig Free City's creation and development: 1919-1921

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<sup>710</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Powstania Śląskie 1919 1920 1921 Nieznana Wojna Polsko-Niemiecka*, *op. cit.*, p. 344-345.

The Danzig question was the only territorial dispute in the northern, southern and western border of post-World War I reborn Poland that did not engage Poles in an armed conflict—along with the East Prussia’s plebiscite in Warmia and Masuria. The latter could also be regarded as one of the eastern border Polish territorial disputes, but it has also been included in chapter 2 due to being a territorial dispute with Germany.

To give some background into the question it is important to explain, first of all, that the Treaty of Versailles established the basis for the separation of Danzig from Germany and the transformation of the city into an independent state, under the League of Nations mandate’s auspice, that had to give Poland access to sea transport through its port. Moreover, the role of Danzig’s diplomatic representation was to be in Polish hands. In addition, it can be stated that in the process of Danzig Free City’s creation and development, there were six main actors or stakeholders: the city’s representatives and institutions, the Polish government, the Entente’s Council of Ambassadors, the League of Nations including its Council, Great Britain (who gained a much larger influence on the Danzig question than France) and, last but not least, the League of Nations-appointed High Commissioner<sup>711</sup>.

In regard to the relevant analysis that needs to be performed here, it is worth explaining first that the formation of the Danzig Free City and the question of its relations with the new Polish state had certain impact in the Spanish press and had a bigger impact on Spain’s diplomacy, but certainly had less impact in Spain than the Polish-Soviet War, the Upper Silesia dispute and the Vilna question.

Danzig had been historically, especially in the times of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, an important port city for Spain from a commercial point of view because of wood imports, to be used in naval construction, from Danzig’s Baltic port to the Spanish Empire<sup>712</sup>. This Spanish interest for the Danzig port had not disappeared many decades later, after the Great War. In fact, on March 25, 1921 Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda, a regular press contributor on Polish affairs and the chancellor of Spain’s legation in Warsaw, reported on the newspaper ‘La Correspondencia de España’ about the creation of the ‘Sociedad Hispano-Báltica’, a project in which he was personally involved, to promote trade between Spain and the countries around the Baltic Sea, mainly by means of using Danzig’s port. Granzów claimed

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<sup>711</sup> See: H. Stępniaak, *Polska i Wolne Miasto Gdańsk (1920-1939) stosunki polityczne*, Gdańsk 2004; S. Mikos, *Wolne Miasto Gdańsk a Liga Narodów 1920-1939*, Wydawnictwo Morskie, Gdańsk 1979.

<sup>712</sup> R. Reichert, *El comercio directo de maderas para la construcción naval española y de otros bienes provenientes de la región del Báltico sur, 1700-1783*, ‘Hispania’, 2016, vol. LXXVI, n.º. 252, enero-abril, págs. 129-157, [accessed on <https://hispania.revistas.csic.es/index.php/hispania/article/view/481/477>].

that “Danzig’s port, due to its exceptional geographic situation is called to have a brilliant future”. He also argued Danzig’s port was secondary when Danzig was a city of Prussia and Germany, due to the near stronger ports of Stettin and Königsberg, with which it had to compete, but according to him, this port would become much more important due to Poland’s independence.

In addition, Danzig’s historical significance for Spain is reflected on the fact that the Southern European country permanently had a consulate in Danzig since 1752<sup>713</sup>. In the analysed period in this dissertation the Spanish consuls in the harbour city were Ernst Plagemann and Juan de Dios Egea successively. The analysed sources on Spain’s diplomatic reports and press refer mostly to the period from 1920 until early 1921 in which the Danzig Free City was ruled by Reginald Tower, Edward Lisle Strutt and Bernardo Attolico successively, but among all the primary sources examined on this question there are only mentions to the Brit Reginald Tower as High Commissioner because most of these diplomatic communications correspond to his period of activity.

Both Spanish press commentators and diplomats used the word “Dantzig” (with a *t*) to refer to the city’s name, although the name Gdańsk was also used along with Dantzig, sometimes being Dantzig in brackets, sometimes being Gdańsk in brackets, by most press contributors who dedicated words to this question. The original German name Danzig, without a *t*, is not seen in the examined Spanish primary sources.

Chronologically speaking, the first reference to the Poland-Danzig question in the Spanish press appeared on ‘ABC’ on December 31, 1918. On this text the newspaper editors stated that “the Polish chiefs intend to occupy at all costs the port of Danzig”<sup>714</sup>. On February 20, 1920 Agüera reported to State Minister about the arrival of Haller’s troops to Puck by the Baltic Sea on February 10 and the so-called “Poland’s Wedding to the Sea”, a day the Spanish diplomat described as “historical for the Polish nation” because Poland’s dreamed aspiration came true. Agüera argued Haller’s Polish troops reached the Baltic Sea “by following their occupation plan of the former German territories that simply come back to Poland’s ownership, because of most of its population being essentially Polish”, so the diplomat recognized Pomeranian and Greater Poland lands taken by Haller’s troops as ethnically Polish. Agüera also referred to celebrations of this event in Puck attended by French colonel Édouard Allegrini, as

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<sup>713</sup> A. Poschmann, *El Consulado de España en Danzig desde 1752 hasta 1773*, “Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos”, Madrid 1919, <https://pbc.gda.pl/dlibra/publication/17845/edition/13923/content> [accessed on 15.03.2022].

<sup>714</sup> “El nuevo gobierno nacional alemán. Los polacos contra Alemania”, ‘ABC’, 31.12.1918, p. 7.

France's representative, Polish "occupation troops" and Polish authorities<sup>715</sup>. Stępniaak argues that "in the conception of the Polish government general Haller's army had to determine the future of Gdansk's, along with its port belonging to Poland" but this required Haller's troops disembarking in Gdańsk<sup>716</sup>. Despite finally not arriving in Poland through Danzig's port, but *via* railway through Germany, the return of Haller's troops from France to Poland had a crucial role in Poland's takeover of the corridor Baltic area<sup>717</sup>. As a result, the fact that Poland owned the Baltic corridor separating Danzig from Germany, but without a port, increased Poland's legitimacy to play an important role in Danzig.

In regard to the Danzig question, not only Spain's diplomacy views and perspectives on Polish political events have been analysed. In fact, an additional analysis is needed because Spanish diplomacy was directly, although unintentionally, involved in a question that had an influence in the development of the Free City of Danzig: the local rifles factory, whose functioning was regulated by the League of Nations since the Treaty of Versailles. 'El Sol,' on February 20, 1921 reported that the Council of the League of Nations starting on February 21 in Paris would deal in the third part of the agenda with "the fabrication of war rifles" in Danzig<sup>718</sup>. No meeting minutes from this Council Session on February 1921 referring to the Danzig rifle factory have been found in the online archive of the League of Nations<sup>719</sup>. As Spain's consul in Danzig Juan de Dios Egea explained to Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera, in a letter signed on March 11, the city had a weapons factory, that the League of Nations decided to close, and despite for some time allowing it to operate with *ad-hoc* permits, at some point the League no longer gave permission to produce ordered sets of rifles. Therefore, Danzig's senator and minister of Public Works Mr. Ludwik Noe, on behalf of Danzig's Senate visited Spain's consul in Danzig to ask him for Spain's intercession in the League of Nations to keep the factory running. Mr. Noe explained to Juan de Egea that if the factory closed, this would cause a total economic disaster in the city and the Spanish consul reported to Spain's minister in Warsaw that he agreed on such conclusion, expressed by Mr. Noe. Next, Agüera reported to State Minister he also agreed with this

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<sup>715</sup> AHN, H1681, 20.02.1920, Spain's minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).

<sup>716</sup> H. Stępniaak, *Polska i Wolne Miasto Gdańsk (1920-1939) stosunki polityczne*, Oficyna Pomorska, Gdańsk 2004, p. 68. Original quoted text „W pojęciu rządu polskiego armia gen. J. Hallera miała przesądzić losy przynależności Gdańska wraz z portem do Polski”.

<sup>717</sup> A. Pastorek, *Błękitna Armia Generała Józefa Hallera. Geneza powstania i wkład w walkę o niepodległość Polski*, Wojskowe Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej, Warszawa unknown publication year.

<sup>718</sup> "Sociedad de las Naciones. La próxima reunión del Consejo", 'El Sol', 20.02.1921, p. 12.

<sup>719</sup> <https://archives.ungeneva.org/lontad> [accessed 15.03.2022]

prediction about the impact on Danzig's economy of the factory's shutdown, but he was not in condition to oppose the league of Nations decisions taking into account Spain's "high interests" in the organization<sup>720</sup>.

After this meeting with Mr. Noe, Spain's Consul Juan de Egea found out that rumours circulated in Danzig attributing to Spain a position favourable to the closure of the rifle factory in the League of Nations Council. On a letter written on March 14, 1921, after gathering this information, the Consul in Danzig informed Agüera about it. In his letter to Agüera, next forwarded by the Warsaw-based diplomat to state minister on March 19, the consul was convinced that these rumours wanted to place on Spain, in a totally unjustified way, the responsibility for the support in the League of Nations by several Latin American member countries, led by Chile, to the decision of closing Danzig's rifle factory. As a result, Spain's consul insinuated that the problem was placed on Spain's shoulders, so that the country would take action in the issue. He explained that, as Mr Noe told him, initially, permits were given by the League of Nations, until certain moment, allowing the factory to produce rifles, and even the Polish government ordered 100.000 rifles from the factory, but, at some point, the permit was no longer given. He also explained that he had found out that since Peru had ordered rifles from the Danzig factory and Peru was in conflict with Chile, the latter persuaded all the Spanish speaking countries in the League of Nations Council to vote in favour of closing the Danzig rifles factory, but in Danzig it was thought, or at least information had been reported, that it had been Spain who had persuaded all the Latin American countries to have such a stand on the rifles factory question. The consul did not clarify this explicitly, at least not on what was reported by Agüera, but it can be interpreted that this information was in reality the main, or one of the main reasons why Mr. Noe reported the factory closure issue precisely to the Spanish consul in Danzig. As a result of this meeting with Mr. Noe, Spain's consul in Danzig also expressed his concern about a possible worsening of Spain's relations with the free city, where, he assured, there was a lot of sympathy for Spain. He added that the city's authorities always reacted positively when the Consulate had a request for them<sup>721</sup>. We, thus, see the vital importance that the consul gave to sustaining the positive situation for Spain in Danzig and the good relations between the consulate and the Free City's authorities. It can be interpreted that Spain's consul was also aware of the significance Danzig could play in the trade relations

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<sup>720</sup> AHN, H1681, 15.03.1921, Spain's plenipotenciary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor)

<sup>721</sup> *Ibidem*, 19.03.1921, Spain's plenipotenciary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's state minister Marqués de Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).



between Spain and the new Polish state. On March 19 Agüera reported to State minister the following, regarding Spain's diplomatic role in the Free city: information was circulating in the free city that the decision of the Council of the League of Nations to close the Gdańsk arms factories had had the support of Spain and South American countries. The minister in Warsaw considered it convenient to deny these rumours<sup>722</sup>. On April 6 Servando Crespo, Spain's interim Undersecretary of State, responded, in a letter to Gutiérrez de Agüera, that it had to be communicated to the Spanish consul in Danzig that there was certainty that Spain did not have a position contrary to the functioning of the rifles industry in the free city in the League of Nations Council and. Furthermore, Crespo assured that with this false information it seemed certain people [in Danzig or outside, the Spanish diplomat didn't give further details] wanted to confront Spain with Poland, just like other unfounded information that appeared previously, according to which, Spain had positioned itself against the Polish mandate over the Free City<sup>723</sup>. It is worth noting that Servando Crespo here equals Poland to Free city authorities, at least when it comes to being the interested part in the rifle factory being active in the Free City. One can hypothesize that Crespo probably believed Poland wanted the rifle factory to be working so it could get supplied from it. However, why would Crespo think there was an interest in Danzig in confronting Spain with Poland? A clear answer cannot be given. A possible hypothesis is that perhaps the Spanish officer believed some in Danzig, by means of these rumours, would damage the opinions about Spain in Poland's diplomacy, but, without knowing more details, this thought does not seem very reasonable.

Most press comments on the Danzig question on Spanish newspapers more or less directly or explicitly attempted to justify both a particular status and a state belonging for Danzig. For instance, on December 16, 1919 on 'La Correspondencia de España' Granzów de la Cerda claimed Danzig was a historically Polish city that after the First Partition in 1772 was strongly Germanized, even though it was not taken by Prussia until 1793. He explained the city was currently surrounded by Poles in the countryside, recognizing at the same time that most population in the city was German. He added Poland always regarded the city as "a free port" and claimed that "its population, although in its majority is German, regards the city as a Polish capital"<sup>724</sup>. Granzów argued in March 1920 that Danzig, in his view, changed positively since

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<sup>722</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>723</sup> *Ibidem*, 6.04.1921, Spain's State Undersecretary Servando Crespo to Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera.

<sup>724</sup> "Desde Polonia. La Prusia occidental (de nuestro redactor especial)", 'La Correspondencia de España', 16.12.1919, p. 1.

the signature of the Versailles Treaty and the city would be able to flourish once again as it did under Poland before the Partitions<sup>725</sup>. Spain's minister in Warsaw Agüera, during his visit to the city, also saw an untroubled transition from Germany to independent city experienced by Danzingers and claimed that "the transformation of Danzig from a Prussian City to a Free City has been carried out in a normal way, and its inhabitants, at least from outside, don't seem upset because of their separation from Prussia[...]"<sup>726</sup>. However, Spain's diplomatic representative in Poland in February 1920 reported that since Danzig's harbour, which was in the process becoming a free port, was not given "unconditionally" to Poland, the Polish government intended to build their own port in their own stretch of the Baltic Coast and mentioned a 500.000 marks credit approved to research the project of the port construction. He added that, in his opinion, this budgeted amount, taking into account the low value of the Polish currency, was not realistic enough to cover the cost of such research<sup>727</sup>.

Among the examined sources, most opinions, except those by Sofía Casanova and Granzów de la Cerda on 'ABC' and 'La Correspondencia de España', respectively, were opposed to Poland's partial or total rights over the port city of Danzig. The Germanophile daily newspaper 'ABC' was critical about the solution used by the Treaty of Versailles to give Poland access to the sea, which the newspaper's editors regarded as "absurd"<sup>728</sup>. The same adjective was used by ABC's correspondent in Berlin, Javier Bueno, to refer to the corridor and Free City creations<sup>729</sup>. Meanwhile, 'ABC's editors stated that Poland violated the Treaty of Versailles by having more power over Gdańsk than the economic-only possibilities granted by the Treaty and the newspaper also criticised the very existence of the Free City<sup>730</sup>. It can be interpreted that the newspaper editors believed Gdańsk should keep being a part of Germany. In addition, conservative pro-monarchic, allegedly non-pro-Entente and non-Germanophile newspaper 'La Época' was even against the Polish claim on Gdańsk based on the need for a port. "La Época" argued that:

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<sup>725</sup> "La vida en Dantzig (de nuestro redactor especial)", 'La Correspondencia de España', 22.03.1920, p. 1.

<sup>726</sup> AHN, H1681, 23.04.1920, Spain's Plenipotentiary Minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor). Original quoted text: "La transformación de Dantzig como ciudad prusiana en ciudad libre, se ha llevado a cabo de una manera normal, y los habitantes, por lo menos exteriormente, no parecen disgustados de su separación de Prusia[...]"

<sup>727</sup> *Ibidem*, 20.02.1920, Spain's minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).

<sup>728</sup> "Boletín del día. La crueldad de Lloyd George", 'ABC', 11.08.1920, p. 15.

<sup>729</sup> "ABC en Alemania. La Paz de la muerte", 'ABC', 19.06.1919, p. 4.

<sup>730</sup> "Boletín del día. La crueldad de Lloyd George", 'ABC', 11.08.1920, p. 15.

“if the Bulgarian theory about Dedeagaç [current Alexandroupoli, Greece] and Cavalla [current Kavala, Greece] would be accepted, then the Polish theory about Dantzig should be accepted as well as the Hungarian one in the Adriatic and many others. Even Switzerland could claim Nice, to have access to the Mediterranean”<sup>731</sup>.

Even in a pro-allied newspaper like ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, Eugenio Ramos referred to the existing difficulties for the application of the Versailles Treaty regarding the creation of the Danzig Free City. He described the question of implementing the new status quo in Gdańsk (and in Memel) according to the Treaty of Versailles that the Supreme Council had to face, as “difficult, delicate and serious”. According to this columnist, the same applied to all the new eastern German borders, which it regarded as the part of the treaty whose fulfilment was the most entangled, because “it demands on itself a true military expedition and the mobilization of an enormous contingent personal”<sup>732</sup>. On September 26, 1919, on ‘La Correspondencia de España’, Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda claimed “Gdansk (Dantzig) is not yet an essentially Polish port”<sup>733</sup> and on December 16 of the same year he claimed: “Economically and politically Gdansk must be the great port of Poland, and even if it is declared a free port, in our opinion a mistake, because Gdansk should completely belong to a unified and independent Poland”<sup>734</sup>. He added that this was even more justified taking into account that according to Wilson, “this is the true access of Poland to the sea”<sup>735</sup>.

However, on March 20, 1920, Granzów, on a text dedicated to the past and present of Prussia, wrote that “Eastern Prussia, as well as Gdansk (Dantzig) must continue being German, despite looking like a Republic, whose relations with Germany and organization are likely to give us many surprises”<sup>736</sup>. This comment was not aligned with his other texts about the city and its relations with Poland and seems contradictory with other of the author’s texts on the Gdańsk question in which he emphasized the Polishness of Gdańsk. It is unlikely that he started

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<sup>731</sup> “La cuestión de la Tracia”, ‘La Época’, 27.08.1919, p. 1. original quoted text: “Si se aceptara la teoría búlgara sobre Dedeagach o Cavalla, habría que aceptar la polaca en Dantzig, la húngara en el Adriático y otras más. Incluso Suiza podría reclamar Niza, para tener acceso al mediterráneo”.

<sup>732</sup> “De la Conferencia de la Paz. Austria, Dantzig y el Rhin”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 30.07.1919, p. 1.

<sup>733</sup> “Desde Polonia. El estado político. (de nuestro redactor especial) II”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 26.09.1919, p. 1.

<sup>734</sup> “Desde Polonia. La Prusia occidental (de nuestro redactor especial)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 16.12.1919, p.1. Original quoted text: “Económica y políticamente, Gdansk debe ser el gran puerto de Polonia, y aunque se le ha declarado puerto libre, a nuestro modesto parecer ello ha sido un error, pues Gdansk debería pertenecer por completo a la Polonia unificada e independiente”.

<sup>735</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>736</sup> “Desde Polonia. El problema del Báltico (de nuestro redactor especial)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 20.03.1920, p. 1.

to change his views on the Polishness of Gdańsk. Was this really what Granzów meant in his text or was it a lapsus? It is very difficult to find an answer to this question.

Two remarkable and similar analogies concerning Danzig's geopolitical importance for Great Britain appear in the examined Spanish press sources: on the one hand Sofía Casanova claimed that Danzig had become "the Gibraltar of the Baltic" since, in her view, the Baltic city had turned into a British port outside Great Britain and the British Empire. On the other hand, 'La Correspondencia de España's Granzów de la Cerda reported that one of local German-language local newspapers in Danzig claimed that "Danzig is the North Suez for England"<sup>737</sup>.

Another Danzig-related topic that was very present in Agüera's reports from Warsaw to State Minister was the Poland-Danzig agreements and covenant. On July 15, 1920 the diplomat reported to State Minister that a project of covenant between Poland and the Free City of Danzig had been elaborated by Danzig's State Council. One might initially think that by State Council Agüera referred to the institution created on March 5, 1920 by High Commissioner Reginald Tower with representatives from the local administration and political parties<sup>738</sup>. However, the State Council was not the organism with the responsibility to work on the Poland-Danzig Covenant. Such responsibility to prepare the covenant regulating relations between Poland and Danzig, as well the one for creating the Danzig Constitution, as Stępniaak explains, was in the hands of the Legislative Assembly inaugurated on 14 June, 1920, so Agüera most likely either used an incorrect source of information or mixed up these two institutions<sup>739</sup>. Stępniaak also explains that Poland did not accept the covenant proposal elaborated by the Danzig Legislative Assembly. It is difficult to determine with absolute certainty if the points presented by Agüera indeed referred to Danzig representatives' proposal for the covenant, or they referred in reality to the Poland-Danzig provisional agreement signed on April 22. The doubt here is justified by the similarity of the points included by Agüera in his diplomatic report with the content of the provisional agreement as summarised by Stępniaak, when looking at the custom-related and food supply-related aspects of Polish-Danzig relations established by the agreement<sup>740</sup>. Mikos's definition of the April 22 provisional agreement, "Poland-Danzig economic rapprochement" corresponds very well to the points described by Agüera in his July 15 report. Unfortunately, neither Stępniaak nor Mikos present in their works a summary of the content of the Danzig first proposal for a covenant, only the content of the version presented by the Ambassadors Council

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<sup>737</sup> "Desde Polonia. El espíritu de Dantzig", 'La Correspondencia de España', 18.03.1920, p. 1.

<sup>738</sup> H. Stępniaak, *Polska i Wolne Miasto Gdańsk (1920-1939) stosunki polityczne, op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>739</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 55.

<sup>740</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 70-71.

later on in 1920, that was accepted by the Dantzig representatives but not initially by the Polish part.

Theoretically, the goal of the Polish-Danzig Covenant was to put article 104 of the Versailles Treaty into practice. This article of the Peace Treaty was mentioned by Agüera in one of his reports and also by 'ABC'. The newspaper claimed that article 104 theoretically gave the Free City certain freedoms but these were not respected by France, as seen in the case of the city's neutrality towards the Polish-Soviet War, which, according to the newspaper, France did not respect<sup>741</sup>. Spain's minister in Warsaw, Agüera, on October 31, 1920 reported to State Minister that the Poland-Danzig Covenant was ready to be signed (and he was attaching it to his report) after being presented by the ambassadors conference in Paris, in line with Versailles treaty article 104. Agüera also reported that Danzig representatives were already willing to sign the covenant, but Polish delegates didn't want to sign the document because, according to them, the text was not complying with what the 104 Versailles Treaty article offered to Poland. Spain's minister in Warsaw added that the Polish government asked the Ambassadors Conference to make changes to adjust the text to the Treaty of Versailles. Agüera listed the points in the proposed covenant text on which the Polish government saw contradictions with article 104 of the Versailles Treaty:

“1.The project prevents Poland from making Danzig its natural port, from creating a Registry Office there and from constituting a Maritime Court. 2.The institution of a customs administration in Danzig compromises the incorporation of the city into the Polish customs regime, an incorporation formally provided for by the Treaty of Versailles. 3.The creation of a Danzig Port and Seaways Council, for transit service matters, which the Treaty of Versailles has not provided for, may seriously modify trade relations between Poland and the Free City”<sup>742</sup>.

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<sup>741</sup> “Boletín del día. La Ciudad Libre de Dantzig”, 'ABC', 25.08.1920, p. 15.

<sup>742</sup> AHN, H1681, 31.10.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor). Original quoted text: “1. El proyecto impide a Polonia hacer de Dantzig su puerto natural, de crear allí una Oficina de Registros y de constituir un Tribunal marítimo. 2.La institución de una administración aduanera en Dantzig, compromete la incorporación de la ciudad al régimen aduanero de Polonia, incorporación formalmente prevista por el tratado de Versalles.3. La creación de un Consejo de Puerto y vías marítimas de Dantzig, para los asuntos de servicio de tránsito, que el Tratado de Versalles no ha previsto, puede modificar gravemente las relaciones comerciales entre Polonia y la Ciudad libre”.

Both in Spain's diplomatic correspondence and on press articles the difficulties for an agreement between Poland and the Free City are mentioned. 'El Heraldo de Madrid's Eugenio Ramos described the question of implementing the new *status quo* in Danzig (and in Memel) according to the Treaty of Versailles that the Supreme Council had to face as "difficult, delicate and serious". Precisely, one of the things Agüera most focused on in his reports about the creation and development of the Danzig Free City was the covenant that had to regulate the relations between the city and Poland. He blamed Poland for the fact a covenant had not yet been agreed and approved. Spain's minister in Warsaw interpreted that "Poles' too susceptible character and their exaggerated sovereignty demands do not make the High Commissioner's job easy and hamper the relations between Dantzic and Poland". He added that, in the end, both parts would understand the benefits of co-existing and that once the Free City's government would be active and Poland would lower its demands "for instance, regarding diplomatic representation", a solid agreement would be reached, that would consolidate the relations between the port city and Poland. Agüera reported that Tower understood the importance of the city's relations with Poland for the port and life in the city and "works hard so that the status determining the relations between Poland and Dantzic is beneficial for both, but he sees the great difficulties that he will have to face before that tight union becomes a fact"<sup>743</sup>

In relation to such Polish-Danzig agreement, on July 15, 1920 Agüera reported it would take two to three weeks until the covenant with Poland and the Free City's Constitution issues were closed. However, it is worth noting that Agüera's prediction was wrong and the covenant was a much more complicated question, which required a longer time to be resolved. He also reported to State Minister that an actual project of covenant between Poland and the Free City of Danzig had been elaborated by the Danzig's State Council<sup>744</sup>. One might initially think that by "State Council" Agüera referred to the institution created on March 5, 1920 by the High Commissioner Reginald Tower with representatives from the local administration and political parties<sup>745</sup>. However, the State Council was not the organism with the responsibility to work on the Poland-Danzig Covenant. Such responsibility to prepare the covenant regulating relations between Poland and Danzig, as well for creating the Danzig Constitution, as Stępnik explains,

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<sup>743</sup> AHN, H1681, 23.04.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor). Original quoted text: "[...]trabaja ardentemente para que el estatuto que habrá de regir entre dicha ciudad y esta república sea lo más ventajoso para ambas, pero no se le ocultan las grandes dificultades que habrá de vencer antes de que esa unión estrecha sea un hecho[...]".

<sup>744</sup> *Ibidem*, 15.07.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>745</sup> H. Stępnik, *Polska i Wolne Miasto Gdańsk (1920-1939) stosunki polityczne, op. cit.*, p. 54.

was in the hands of the Legislative Assembly inaugurated on 14 June, so Agüera either used an incorrect source of information or mixed up these two institutions. Stępniaak also explains that Poland did not accept the proposal for the covenant elaborated by the Danzig Legislative Assembly<sup>746</sup>. It is difficult to determine with absolute certainty if the points presented by Agüera indeed referred to the Danzig's proposal for the covenant, or they referred in reality to the Poland-Danzig provisional agreement signed on April 22. The doubt here is justified by the similarity of the points included by Agüera in his diplomatic report with the content of the provisional agreement as summarised by Stępniaak, when looking at the toll-related and food supply-related aspects of Polish-Danzig relations established by the agreement<sup>747</sup>. Agüera summarized the points of what probably was the provisional agreement in the following way:

“1. According to the peace treaty, Dantzig has been separated from the German confederation, in order to ensure Poland access to the sea. In this way Dantzig has been cut off from its supply base, namely Pomerania. Therefore: Poland undertakes to deliver to Dantzig the complement of its harvests so that this city can receive the same food rations that once came from Pomerania. The price of groceries that come from Poland cannot be higher than what has been assessed in Polish cities. 2. Poland undertakes to deliver to Dantzig the quantities of coal it needs and with the same prices and conditions that it distributes to the other populations of the Republic. 3. Poland undertakes to send to Dantzig essential products in sufficient quantity and at local prices, such as oil, wood, textiles, fertilizers, alcohol and paper. 4. Poland will allow free state fishermen to fish on the entire Hel peninsula. On the other hand, the two States undertake to help each other and to protect their industry, their commerce and their agriculture. Dantzig, as the international port that it is, will give all kinds of guarantees so that Poland can take advantage of its shipping lanes, its "docks" and all the buildings in its port”<sup>748</sup>.

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<sup>746</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>747</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 70-71.

<sup>748</sup> AHN, H1681, 15.07. 1920, Spain's Plenipotentiary Minister in Warsaw Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor). Original quoted text: „1. Según el tratado de paz, Dantzig ha sido separada de la confederación alemana, con objeto de asegurar a Polonia un acceso al mar. De este modo Dantzig ha quedado separada de su base de abastecimiento o sea de Pomerania. Por consiguiente: Polonia se compromete a entregar a Dantzig el complemento de sus cosechas de manera que esta ciudad pueda recibir las mismas raciones alimentarias que en otros tiempos le provenían de Pomerania. El precio de los víveres que proceden de Polonia no puede ser más elevado que el que hayan sido tasados en las ciudades polacas. 2. Polonia se compromete a entregar a Dantzig las cantidades de carbón que necesite y con los mismos precios y condiciones que los distribuye a las demás poblaciones de la República. 3. Polonia se compromete a enviar a Dantzig los productos de primera necesidad en cantidad suficiente y al precio local, tales como petróleo, maderas, materias textiles, abonos, alcohol y papel. 4. Polonia permitirá a los pescadores del estado libre pescar en toda la península de Hela”.

Next, Agüera reported that the Ambassadors Council was analysing the question of Danzig based on the Treaty of Versailles, which, in Agüera's view, had not yet clarified the status and functioning of the Free City well enough, and the Spanish diplomat added this would be addressed on September 1, with the attendance of High commissioner Reginald Tower, Poland's representatives and Danzig representatives. More than three months later, on October 31, 1920, Spain's minister in Warsaw reported to state minister that the covenant Poland-Danzig was ready to be signed (and he was attaching it to his report) after being presented by the Ambassadors Conference in Paris, in line with Versailles treaty article 104. He also reported that during the negotiations Poland was represented by Paderewski and Szymon Aszkenazy and Danzig was represented by the mayor Heinrich Sahn and the deputy Schimer. Agüera reported that Danzig representatives were already willing to sign the covenant but the Polish delegates did not want to sign the document because, according to them, the text did not comply with what the 104 Versailles treaty article offered to Poland. The Spanish diplomat added that the Polish government asked the ambassadors conference to make changes to adjust the text to the Treaty of Versailles, and Agüera listed the points in the proposed covenant text on which the Polish government saw contradictions with article 104 of the Versailles Treaty<sup>749</sup>. These contradictory points for the Polish side, reported by Agüera, have been here checked against the content of article 104: "1. The project prevents Poland from making Dantzic its natural port, from creating a Registry Office there and from constituting a Maritime Court"<sup>750</sup>. In reality, Article 104 does not refer to registry office or maritime court creation by Poland but only to Poland's usage of the port. However, this might be a bit open to interpretation if a registry office is needed for the usage of the port. Point 2 of Article 104 turns Danzig into Poland's port in terms of its usage. Point 2 also states: "to ensure to Poland without any restriction the free use and service of all waterways, docks, basins, wharves and other works within the territory of the Free City necessary for Polish imports and exports". Agüera also reported that, according to the Polish government: "2. The institution of a customs administration in Danzig compromises the incorporation of the city into the Polish customs regime, an incorporation formally provided for by the Treaty of Versailles"<sup>751</sup>. This would conflict with point 1 of Versailles article 104: "To

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<sup>749</sup> AHN, H1681, 31.10. 1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>750</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>751</sup> *Ibidem*



effect the inclusion of the Free City of Danzig within the Polish customs frontiers, and to establish a free area in the port”.

The third discrepancy with article 104 reported by the Polish government was “The creation of a Dantzig Port and Seaways Council, for transit service matters, which the Treaty of Versailles has not provided for, may seriously modify trade relations between Poland and the Free City”<sup>752</sup>. In relation to this, Polish historian Henryk Stępniaak claims that “however, in Poland an unsatisfied conviction dominated, maybe due to not enough information about what happened in Paris, that article 104 of Versailles treaty would transfer the supervision of Dantzig port to Poland. The creation of the Council of the Port and Seaways in the Paris convention was regarded [in Poland] as Poland’s failure in its efforts to obtain the Danzig port”<sup>753</sup>.

As a matter of fact, article 104 does not mention the creation of a Council of the Port and Seaways under Danzig’s control but also does not mention that Poland will own control or supervise the port, since article 104 (in points 2 and 4) only refers to the usage and improvement of the port by Poland<sup>754</sup>. Spain’s diplomatic representative in Warsaw added that Poland could make concessions in other points of the proposed covenant, but not on those three points by

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<sup>752</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>753</sup> H. Stępniaak, *Polska i Wolne Miasto Gdańsk (1920-1939) stosunki polityczne, op. cit.*, p.73. Original quoted text: “Jednak w Polsce panowało nieuzasadnione przekonanie, być może, na skutek niedostatecznej informacji o tym co działo się w Paryżu, że art. 104 traktatu wersalskiego przekazuje port gdański pod zwierzchnictwo Polski. Powołanie w konwencji paryskiej Rady Portu i Dróg Wodnych było uznane jako porażka Polski w staraniach o uzyskanie portu gdańskiego”.

<sup>754</sup> The full text of article 104 in the Versailles Treaty says: “The Principal Allied and Associated Powers undertake to negotiate a Treaty between the Polish Government and the Free City of Danzig, which shall come into force at the same time as the establishment of the said Free City, with the following objects:

To effect the inclusion of the Free City of Danzig within the Polish customs frontiers, and to establish a free area in the port;

To ensure to Poland without any restriction the free use and service of all waterways, docks, basins, wharves and other works within the territory of the Free City necessary for Polish imports and exports;

To ensure to Poland the control and administration of the Vistula and of the whole railway system within the Free City, except such street and other railways as serve primarily the needs of the Free City, and of postal, telegraphic and telephonic communication between Poland and the port of Danzig;.

To ensure to Poland the right to develop and improve the waterways, docks, basins, wharves, railways and other works and means of communication mentioned in this Article, as well as to lease or purchase through appropriate processes such land and other property as may be necessary for these purposes;

To provide against any discrimination within the Free City of Danzig to the detriment of citizens of Poland and other persons of Polish origin or speech;

To provide that the Polish government shall undertake the conduct of the foreign relations of the Free City of Danzig as well as the diplomatic protection of citizens of that city when abroad”.

[https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/treaty\\_of\\_versailles-112018.pdf](https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/treaty_of_versailles-112018.pdf), p.58-59. [accessed 7.03.2022]

him listed, and finally reported that Poland's delegates had already requested the revision of the covenant, and the revision was being negotiated at the moment he was writing his report<sup>755</sup>.

It must be also explained that on November 16, 1920 Agüera reported to Spain's state minister that on the previous day the Statute of the Danzig Free City had been proclaimed after an agreement between the city's representatives and Poland. In reality, he referred to the agreed and signed November 9 Covenant between Poland and the Free City. Spain's Warsaw minister mentioned that the text of this agreement was slightly changed when comparing it with the text he sent on his October 31 correspondence, meaning the one previously presented by the Ambassadors' Council that Poland's delegation did not accept. He wrote that the "Polish delegate in Paris" would now sign the agreement, but Poland would later still expect to receive from the League of Nations the mandate for the military defence of Danzig, something Agüera regarded as crucial for Poland, and about which, he explained, the Ambassadors' Council didn't reach an agreement. Spain's minister in Poland interpreted that "if it obtains this mandate, Poland's demands will be almost completely satisfied" because the diplomatic activity of Danzig Free City had already been bestowed to the country. Agüera argued that, thanks to these "concessions", and despite not owning Danzig's sovereignty, Poland was now in a very beneficial situation regarding the Danzig question, because in the Free City it could perform "a skilful attraction policy": Poland would, in Agüera's view, obtain the ownership of the free city's port "and of the river communications that place her [Poland] in direct contact with the Baltic Sea". We learn that Poland's Foreign Minister Eustachy Sapieha had a similar view to Agüera's when we look at November 29, 1920 Agüera's correspondence to Spain's state minister in which the minister in Warsaw reported that Sapieha, in declarations to the press about the Polish-Soviet Riga negotiations, said that Poland obtained everything it could regarding the Danzig Free City<sup>756</sup>.

The Danzig-Poland Covenant is more critically assessed, from the point of view of Polish interests, by Polish historian Stanisław Mikos, who argues that the covenant signed on November 9, 1920 reduced the amount of political power over Danzig that Poland had been granted in the Treaty of Versailles. Mikos adds that "Poland did not obtain the right to a complete control of the Danzig port", which in the end was to be taken by the new institution

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<sup>755</sup> AHN, H1681, 31.10.1920, Spain's minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor)

<sup>756</sup> *Ibidem*, 29.11.1920, Spain's minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).

created by the covenant, the Port and Seaways Council, which was according to Mikos, Reginald Tower's creation<sup>757</sup>.

Another interesting aspect to analyse within the Danzig question, is the Danzig-Poland relations at a real life level. The fact is that both Agüera and Granzów expected relations between Danzig's Free City inhabitants and Poland to improve over time. On April 23, 1920 Agüera reported that, in the end, both parts would understand the benefits of co-existing and that once the Free City's government would be active and Poland would lower its demands "for instance regarding diplomatic representation", a solid agreement would be reached, that would consolidate the relations between the port city and Poland<sup>758</sup>. The Spanish diplomat also reported that he hoped the relations between the new Polish state and the Free City's institutions would improve and consolidate, so that trade could develop in Danzig.

In terms of Danzig-Poland relations at a macroeconomic and political level, it is worth highlighting that the concept of 'hinterland' was often used by both Agüera and Granzów de la Cerda to describe the theoretical economic relation between the Free City and the new Polish state. For instance, on March 4, 1920 Agüera claimed Poland would play the role of Danzig's hinterland once Poland would develop itself<sup>759</sup> and on April 23, 1920 the Spanish diplomat claimed Danzig's hinterland was too small to be its economic sustain<sup>760</sup>. In this case, he was not referring to Poland but to the free city areas outside the Danzig city itself. On the same report, Agüera stated Poland was Danzig's "forced hinterland"<sup>761</sup>. In this context, "forced hinterland" must be understood as a territory determined by geography and borders. In addition, on March 11, 1921 Spain's Consul in Danzig, Juan de Dios Egea, claimed that since Danzig's hinterland was so small, the free city didn't have enough economic alternatives to the rifle factory if it was closed. Meanwhile, on 'La Correspondencia de España', Granzów argued that it would be beneficial for Danzig's population to establish good relations with Poland, because the country was the city's hinterland and the Spanish diplomat gave the figures of 300.000 inhabitants in the city and 30.000.000 inhabitants in Poland<sup>762</sup>.

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<sup>757</sup> S. Mikos, *Wolne Miasto Gdańsk a Liga Narodów 1920-1939, op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>758</sup> AHN, H1681, 23.04.1920. Spain's minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).

<sup>759</sup> *Ibidem*, 4.03.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).

<sup>760</sup> *Ibidem*, 23.04.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).

<sup>761</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>762</sup> Was the concept of hinterland in the early 1920s the same as now? According to the Merriam Webster dictionary a hinterland may be: a "region lying inland from a coast", "a region remote from urban areas" or "a region lying

Both Agüera and Granzów visited Danzig during the analysed period. The experienced diplomat spent in the Baltic city two days in April 1920 and described the city as “dead” and “unsustainable” due to a lack of supplies and its economic isolation<sup>763</sup>. However, in March 1920, Granzów described Danzig quite differently, as a vibrant city with an international atmosphere, in which people spent leisure time and made money with commerce<sup>764</sup>. Both Granzów and Agüera referred to the Danzig Trade Fair, and both described it as a failure, particularly for Polish traders. On March 24, 1920, in one of his press contributions to ‘La Correspondencia de España’, Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda reported about the Danzig Trade Fair and used the occasion to claim that the Treaty of Versailles resolved the Danzig question in a “not very favourable” way for Polish industrialists, who, in Granzów’s opinion, were “discouraged” because they perceived Danzig as a city that should be, within Poland, the key for the new state’s “foreign trade development”. Granzów also explained that if the Trade Fair was not as successful as it could have been it was due to a lack of industrial boost in Poland caused by the wars the country faced, but Granzów added the German producers did not contribute to make the Trade Fair a success, either<sup>765</sup>.

Another significant matter to be analysed within the Danzig question after the Great War, is the interpretations that Spanish press contributors and correspondents made of England’s attitude towards the Free City of Danzig, the locals’ attitudes towards the British supervisors of the city, and the relations between the city and Poland.

In regard to Polish-Danzig relations, it must be highlighted that on March 18, 1920, Granzów wrote from Danzig on ‘La Correspondencia de España’ that local Poles with whom he talked were pessimist about Danzig’s reality and relations with Poland. In addition, he claimed that most Danzig inhabitants did not want to be part of Poland because they feared the slow and outdated bureaucratic system that would be imposed to them from Warsaw. In addition, Granzów noticed that Poles were not very welcomed in Danzig, since it was very

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beyond major metropolitan or cultural centres”. However, this online dictionary also explains that “In the late 19th century, geographer George Chisholm took note of the German word *Hinterland* (literally "land in back of") and applied it specifically to “the region just inland from a port or coastal settlement”. (Chisholm spelled the word *hinderland*, but English speakers eventually settled on *hinterland*.)” “Early in the 20th century, another geographer adopted the German *Umland* ("land around") to refer to “the territory around an inland town”. What *hinterland* and *umland* have in common is a reference to “a region economically tied to a nearby” city” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hinterland> [accessed 20.03.2022].

<sup>763</sup> AHN, H1681, 23.04.1920. Spain’s minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O’Lawlor).

<sup>764</sup> “Desde Polonia. La vida en Dantzig”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 22.03.1920, p. 1.

<sup>765</sup> “Desde Polonia. La feria de Dantzig”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 24.03.1920, p. 1.

difficult for them to get lodging in the city<sup>766</sup>. In relation to anti-Polish attitudes in Danzig, Agüera argued, referring to the Germanization the city had experienced, that “the anti-Polish attitude of Danzig’s inhabitants is completely natural” due to German propaganda for 150 years “which cannot be removed in few months”<sup>767</sup>. In fact, in December 1919 Granzów had already referred to the strong Germanization the city had experienced after the first Partition of Poland<sup>768</sup>.

In relation to the echoes in the Spanish press of Great Britain’s involvement in Danzig, first it is important to headline that Sofía Casanova was critical about British control over the Free City. In addition, Sofía Casanova criticised England’s attitude regarding the question of the munition shipments through Danzig for Poland to fight Soviet Russia. She claimed that England did nothing against the local chargers in the port of Danzig that refused to take the munitions for the Polish army that arrived in the port from France and England<sup>769</sup>. Nevertheless, on July 28, 1920 Agüera reported that British soldiers were able to take the munitions from boats in Danzig after the port workers refused to do it<sup>770</sup>. It is worth adding that on March 4, in the context of the end of the Danzig Trade Fair, which as it has already been mentioned, was a failure for Polish producers and traders, Agüera had claimed that Polish press and society complained about Britain’s attitude in relation to the Danzig’s question, about Britain not being impartial in line with Versailles Treaty<sup>771</sup>. On March 18 Granzów added that the German language local press was positive about Great Britain but made anti-French and anti-Polish propaganda, what Granzów also interpreted as an attempt to divide France and Britain regarding Danzig. He claimed that one of these newspapers stated “Danzig is the North Suez for England, and we should agree this with England”<sup>772</sup>. Similarly, on April 23 1920, Granzów’s colleague in Spain’s diplomatic mission in Poland, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw, Gutiérrez de Agüera, wrote that Danzig’s inhabitants were not against the British occupiers and had a “peaceful and even friendly” attitude towards them. As an example of that, he mentioned the

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<sup>766</sup> “Desde Polonia. El espíritu de Dantzig”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 18.03.1920, p. 1.

<sup>767</sup> AHN, H1681, 4.03.1920, Spain’s minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O’Lawlor).

<sup>768</sup> “Desde Polonia. La Prusia occidental (de nuestro redactor especial)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 16.12.1919, p. 1.

<sup>769</sup> “ABC en Polonia. Estancamiento”, ‘ABC’, 18.03.1921, p. 4.

<sup>770</sup> AHN, H1681, 28.07.1920, Spain’s minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O’Lawlor).

<sup>771</sup> AHN, H1681, 4.03.1920, Spain’s minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O’Lawlor).

<sup>772</sup> “Desde Polonia. El espíritu de Dantzig”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 18.03.1920, p. 1.

locals' friendly attitude towards a British marines parade<sup>773</sup>. Still in this topic, it is also worth highlighting that on March 22, 1920 Granzow had claimed Danzingers did not see the Brits as their "yesterday's foes"<sup>774</sup>.

Two references are found in the examined Spanish sources to significant political events in Germany, generated by different political sides, affecting the political situation in Danzig. On April 23 1920 Agüera claimed that recent events in Berlin did not have any impact in Danzig and "the city's inhabitants are too sensible to do any hostile show during the allied administration"<sup>775</sup>. By "recent events in Berlin", the Spanish diplomat referred to the Kapp Putsch. However, on a text published on June 8, 1920 (written in May 1920) Sofía Casanova saw a Soviet-inspired German revolutionary influence in the Free City and stated that German Spartakist pro-Bolshevik revolutionists had an increasing influence in Danzig and even attacked both Poles and foreign officers. She stated that "one enters in Danzig by hoisting the burning Soviets' flag"<sup>776</sup>.

Casanova did not regard Danzig's port as Poland's port granted by the Versailles Treaty, or at least not yet, if we look at her text published on 'ABC' on February 3, 1921 (written in January), in which the Spanish renowned writer argued that Germany's defeat gave Poland "a maritime corridor without port"<sup>777</sup>. Moreover, on January 25, 1921 Casanova had claimed that Poland had been denied the possibility of owning Danzig<sup>778</sup>. Similarly, around a year earlier, on February 20, 1920, Agüera stated that Danzig's harbour, becoming a free port, was not given "unconditionally" to Poland and on January 23, 1920 on 'La Correspondencia de España' Granzow had written that the port city of Danzig "will remain internationalized by the League of Nations"<sup>779</sup>.

The figure and views of Reginald Tower regarding the Free City and its relations with Poland is another topic very present in the diplomatic reports Agüera sent to Spain's state minister. On April 23, 1920 Agüera reported that he met High Commissioner Sir Reginald Tower in Danzig and stated that the latter was "optimistic" about the city's future. According

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<sup>773</sup> AHN, H1681, 23.04.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).

<sup>774</sup> "Desde Polonia. La vida en Dantzig", 'La Correspondencia de España', 22.03.1920, p. 1.

<sup>775</sup> AHN, H1681, 23.04.1920. Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).

<sup>776</sup> "Nada cambia", 'ABC', 8.06.1920, p. 3.

<sup>777</sup> "Latidos de fiebre", 'ABC', 3.02.1921, p. 7.

<sup>778</sup> "El plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 25.01.1921, p. 3.

<sup>779</sup> "Desde Polonia. La nueva Europa según el Tratado de Versailles (de nuestro redactor especial)", 'La Correspondencia de España', 23.01.1920, p. 1.

to Agüera, Tower understood the importance of the city's relations with Poland for the port and life in the city. Moreover, Agüera claimed that Tower "works hard so that the status determining the relations between Poland and Dantzig is beneficial for both, but he sees the great difficulties that he will have to face before that tight union becomes a fact", also adding: "I do not doubt about Sir Reginald's good will encouraging himself, and about the absolute need to reach a full agreement with the city that has to be Poland's lung"<sup>780</sup>. On July 15, 1920 Agüera reported that once the Covenant with Poland and the Free City's Constitution issues were closed, this would mean Tower's mission in Danzig would be over, the constitution would be announced, and "the new Commissioner will be appointed by the League of Nations"<sup>781</sup>. It can be seen that Agüera depicted Tower's work in a very positive light.

Another topic featuring in both the examined Spanish press articles and diplomatic reports is the role that Danzig played against Polish interests during the Polish-Soviet War. On August 21, 1920, Agüera referred to the Free City's neutrality declaration regarding the Polish-Soviet War made by Danzig workers, who requested this political stand to Interallied High Commissionaire Reginald Tower. The latter, according to Agüera, in order to avoid bloody unrest, asked the captains of boats carrying munitions and war material for Poland on its way to Danzig port, to go back. The Spanish diplomat added that Reginald Tower's decision was extremely negatively perceived by Polish politicians, who saw in this event "the little effectiveness of Versailles treaty", which according to Agüera, "gives full power to Poland to have its port at its disposal unconditionally". In relation to this problem, Agüera argued that, taking into account that most Danzig inhabitants were German, in his view, the only way to ensure that Poland's rights bestowed by Versailles in Danzig were protected would be the creation of a strong allied or Polish garrison to keep order in the free city<sup>782</sup>. On August 21, 1920, 'La Correspondencia de España' highlighted that one of the Polish difficulties faced in the Polish-Soviet War was the fact that the High Commissioner in Danzig did not easily allow the supply of war materials to Poland through the port of Danzig<sup>783</sup>. In addition, on August 25, 1920, 'La Correspondencia de España's correspondent in Paris, Alberto Insúa, claimed that

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<sup>780</sup> AHN, H1681, 23.04.1920. Spain's minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor). Original quoted text: "No dudo de los buenos deseos que a este le animan, ni de la necesidad absoluta de llegar a un completo acuerdo con la ciudad que ha de ser el pulmón de Polonia".

<sup>781</sup> *Ibidem*, 15.07. 1920, Spain's minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).

<sup>782</sup> *Ibidem*, 21.08.1920, Spain's minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O'Lawlor).

<sup>783</sup> "La Conferencia de Minsk", 'La Correspondencia de España', 21.08.1920, p. 2.

England could contribute to a larger Polish victory against the Bolsheviks if it forced Reginald Tower to “maintain one of the most important clauses of the Versailles Treaty: Poland’s free access to the sea”<sup>784</sup>. The issue was seen in a completely different way by ‘ABC’, which on August 25, 1920 dedicated its international news analysis section, “Boletín del Día” to the Danzig question, and criticised France’s effort to overrule the decision of Danzingers regarding their stand on the Polish-Soviet War: “Both the [Danzig’s] Parliament and the High Commissioner were seriously mistaken. They really believed the free city of Danzig was free, and it turns out it is only free on its name”<sup>785</sup>. The newspaper, contrary to Agüera’s views, did not recognize Poland’s right to use the port at its disposal, and placed a bigger political legitimacy in Danzig’s political freedoms than on the Versailles Treaty’s articles regarding the Baltic city.

Very few references are found in the reviewed press articles and on Agüera’s diplomatic reports to Poland’s relations with the League of Nations (leaving the High Commissioner aside). However, the echoes in the Polish press of the League of Nations decisions to regulate Polish-Danzig relations arrived to the Spanish press when, on January 6, 1921, ‘La Correspondencia de España’ published an article by Granzów de la Cerda written in November 1920, in which he referred to an article published by Polish newspaper ‘Kurjer Poranny’ titled “A Swish admiral to Danzig and the toreros to Vilna”<sup>786</sup>, which criticised the League of Nations for its decisions regarding the Danzig and Vilna disputes involving Poland. The Swiss admiral reference on ‘Kurjer Poranny’ was caused by the alleged League of Nations plan to appoint a Swiss person as the president of the new Polish-Danzig port council institution, the Danzig’s Port and Seaways Council, which was supposed to regulate the usage by Poland of Danzig’s port<sup>787</sup>. To be precise, as Stępniaak explains, in the new council: “[...]Poland and the Free City of Danzig had to have an equal amount of representatives (at most five) under the direction of a commonly elected president of the Port Council, and in case of not reaching an agreement, then the League of Nations would appoint a representative [member of League of Nations] of

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<sup>784</sup> “La Victoria del Vístula. ¿Qué hará Inglaterra? (de nuestro redactor en París)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 25.08.1920, p. 1.

<sup>785</sup> “Boletín del día. La Ciudad Libre de Dantzig”, ‘ABC’, 25.08.1920, p.15.

<sup>786</sup> The reference to “Spanish toreros” was due to the fact the League of Nations planned to send a contingent, formed among others by Spanish troops, to Vilna to organize a plebiscite. See section: Spain and the Polish-Lithuanian conflict over Vilna 1918-1921.

<sup>787</sup> “Desde Polonia. Un “almirante suizo” a Danzig y los toreros a Wilno”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 6.01.1921, p. 1.



Swiss nationality as president”<sup>788</sup>. So, knowing the League’s solution for the Port Council President election, the headline of the ‘Kurjer Poranny’ might seem a bit exaggerated. However, as Agüera explained, on October 31 1920 the Polish government was “naturally” opposed to the appointment of a Swiss person as the President of the Port Council, who would have a “decisive vote”<sup>789</sup>.

On the other side, regarding Poland’s relations with the League of Nations, in the context of the Danzig question, on January 1, 1921, ‘ABC’’s correspondent in Germany Javier Bueno, claimed that Poland made a pause on its war ”against Germans, Russians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Czech-Slovaks” to take the entire Danzig (and Vilna)<sup>790</sup>. It must be interpreted from Bueno’s words, that he believed Poland wanted to show itself as a peaceful and non-imperialist nation in front of the League of Nations, by means of slowing down its military involvement in the different territorial disputes the new state was involved, in order to obtain from the international organization the control over Danzig. It is a fact Poland did not get the full control over Danzig, regardless of whether Poland’s strategy was or not to try to show itself in front on the League of Nations as a non-belligerent and as a state without annexionism ambitions.

By early 1921, even though Poland had further unfulfilled ambitions regarding Danzig, the new state’s leaders had already accepted Poland’s role in the new Danzig Free City, which was not a total control of the port. This was perceived by Agüera as a great deal for Poland whereas among Spanish press commentators there were differences in opinions, but none of the texts were very positive about Poland’s achieved status in Danzig, for lack or for excess, depending on the author’s or newspaper ‘s perspective. For instance, ‘La Época’ didn’t even agree on Poland being entitled to claim Danzig just because of its need for sea access<sup>791</sup>. For ‘ABC’’s editors the access to the sea solution for Poland was absurd and too much, because it “amputated” Germany<sup>792</sup> but ‘ABC’’s contributor Sofía Casanova, who had complete opinion freedom in relation to the newspapers editors’ views, did not regard the solution given to Poland in Danzig as beneficial enough, and, as already mentioned, believed Poland still did not have a

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<sup>788</sup> H. Stępniaak, *Polska i Wolne Miasto Gdańsk (1920-1939) stosunki polityczne, op. cit.*, p. 75. Original quoted text: „[...] Polska i Wolne Miasto Gdańsk miały mieć jednakową liczbę przedstawicieli (najwięcej po pięciu) pod przewodnictwem wybranego wspólnie prezydenta Rady Portu, a w wypadku braku porozumienia, mianowanego na to stanowisko przez Liga Narodów przedstawiciela narodowości szwajcarskiej”.

<sup>789</sup> AHN, H1681, 31.10.1920, Spain’s minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O’Lawlor).

<sup>790</sup> “La post-guerra en 1920 ”, ‘ABC’, 1.01.1921, p. 9.

<sup>791</sup> “La cuestión de la Tracia”, ‘La Época’, 27.08.1919, p. 1.

<sup>792</sup> “Boletín del día. La crueldad de Lloyd George”, ‘ABC’, 11.08.1920, p. 15.

port<sup>793</sup>, whereas Granzów on 'La Correspondencia de España' emphasized the solution given to Poland in Versailles was not good enough for Polish producers and traders<sup>794</sup>. Meanwhile, Spain's diplomacy, due to the League of Nations' decisions regarding the local rifle factory, was concerned about maintaining its reputation in the Free City and the good relations with its authorities, which the Consul and State Ministry connected to relations with Poland due to the prospect Polish usage of Danzig's port.

## Conclusions

The main focus by Agüera's and Spain's press commentators was placed on England's role in Danzig, the usage of Danzig as a port by Poles, and in the relations between the independent city and the Polish state, as well as in the League of Nations' and England's role in the solution given to this territory and its implementation. Agüera praised High Commissioner Reginald Tower's work, whereas Casanova criticised the British intervention in Danzig and the British stand towards Polish interests in the city.

Casimiro Granzów gave a lot more attention to the Danzig question in his press contributions than Sofía Casanova. This is most likely connected to the fact Granzów wanted to develop trade relations between Spain and the Free City and most likely at some point he wanted to conduct its own business operations there by means of the Spanish-Baltic society he was involved in.

It can be interpreted that both Granzów and Casanova saw Danzig as a Polish city and advocated a Polish Danzig, and above it, a full Polish control of the port, as a good solution or the best solution for the future of the port city, whereas Agüera supported the free city solution with Polish-Danzig cooperation and accused Poland of hampering this project, agreeing with Tower's position in this question. In other words, Granzow and Casanova were not satisfied about what Poland had obtained in Versailles regarding Danzig, particularly Granzów, because Polish exporters didn't have a good solution. However, Agüera was very supportive of the Entente's and mainly Great Britain's project for the Baltic city, one can interpret. Agüera's attitude on this question, one can interpret, beyond the diplomat's own views, was probably

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<sup>793</sup> "El plebiscito en Alta Silesia", 'ABC', 25.01.1921, p. 3; "Latidos de fiebre", 'ABC', 3.02.1921, p. 7.

<sup>794</sup> "Desde Polonia. La Feria de Dantzig (de nuestro redactor especial)", 'La Correspondencia de España', 24.03.1920, p. 1.

very determined by Spain's foreign policy of alignment with the Entente, and in this case, alignment with England.

Additionally, it is also important to conclude that Spanish diplomacy was concerned about the damage in Spain's reputation in the Free City that the unbiased rumours about Spain being in favour of closure of the local rifles' factory in the League of Nations Council.

### Spain and the Eastern Prussia (Warmia and Masuria) plebiscite: 1919-1920

The impacts in Spain of the July 11, 1920 Eastern Prussia plebiscite were rather limited, both in the press and on the diplomatic correspondence documents stored in Spain's National Historical Archive. For instance, 'ABC's' Sofía Casanova did not analyse this question whatsoever, and she just mentioned it when discussing other Polish questions. What is more, this question, in fact, did not take much attention from Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw at the time, Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera, either. It is clearly seen that the Warmia, Masuria and Powiśle plebiscite generated fewer impacts than the Upper Silesia, Cieszyn Silesia and Danzig disputes among the examined Spanish press and diplomacy sources, but it generated a few very insightful comments on the plebiscite causes and context that are worth analysing.

In the aftermath of the Great War, in 1919, the southern strip of Eastern Prussia within Germany was undeniably inhabited by large amounts of Polish population. The political status of the region, as a part of Germany's Eastern Prussia, had not changed as a result of the war, and was not challenged until the Peace Conference started. After analysing Polish claims on the region, the Paris Peace Conference Supreme Council decided to leave the political destiny of the region in the hands of the local population, by means of a plebiscite stipulated in the Treaty of Versailles, thus following the Wilsonian principle of nationalities and its inherent need of consulting local populations to execute the self-determination right<sup>795</sup>.

Therefore, for a good understanding of the context around the Eastern Prussia plebiscite one must look at the Treaty of Versailles, which in its articles 94 to 97 defined the territories of

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<sup>795</sup> J. Minakowski, *Baza Artykułów Dotyczących Plebiscytu na Warmii, Mazurach i Powiślu w 1920 roku*, Olsztyn 2010, p. 8-10; W. Brenda, *Polska czy Prusy Wschodnie? Przeegrany plebiscyt*, "Biuletyn IPN 5/2019", Warszawa 2019, p.75-76; A. Derda, *Kampania i przebieg plebiscytu z 11 lipca 1920 roku na Warmii i Mazurach w świetle materiałów tekstowych oraz ikonograficznych zamieszczonych w lokalnej prasie niemieckojęzycznej*, „Echa Przeszłości XXI/1”, Olsztyn 2020, p. 1-2.

Eastern Prussia that would be subjected to a plebiscite in order to determine whether they were to belong to Germany or to Poland<sup>796</sup>. The Treaty also established the conditions that had to be met for the plebiscite to take place. Specifically, in article 95 we read:

“The German troops and authorities will be withdrawn from the area defined above within a period not exceeding fifteen days after the coming into force of the present Treaty[...] On the expiration of the above-mentioned period the said area will be placed under the authority of an International Commission of five members appointed by the Principal Allied and Associated Powers. This Commission will have general powers of administration and, in particular, will be charged with the duty of arranging for the vote and of taking such measures as it may deem necessary for assistance in the exercise of its functions by officials chosen”<sup>797</sup>.

The influences of the Polish delegation and local Polish activists in the Paris Peace Conference to obtain the assignment to Poland of Polish ethnic lands in Eastern Prussia eventually was not enough to convince the relevant commission members for a more favourable solution for Poland<sup>798</sup>. On July 16 1920, already after the plebiscite had taken place, Spanish newspaper ‘ABC’'s editors, in a sarcastic tone, claimed that in the Peace Conference the Poles’ request for a part of Eastern Prussia was accepted, and the region was initially assigned to Poland before the final version of the Versailles peace Treaty, because the diplomats “without a more profound knowledge of the ethnical and geographic reasons used by Poles” took into account that there were music notes from Chopin pieces in 4000 houses of the region. ‘ABC’ also made an analogy between this decision and the one to give the German region of Schleswig to Denmark, even though the Danes did not claim the region. The Germanophile conservative newspaper also stated it was Wilson who decided to organize a plebiscite to determine the disputed region’s belonging, and, therefore, the initial plan to annex the disputed region to Poland was changed<sup>799</sup>. In relation to Wilson’s direct role on the decision to organize a plebiscite in Eastern Prussia, Jerzy Minakowski explains, in the introduction of his base of articles about the plebiscite, that in the sub-commission for the Polish-German border of the

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<sup>796</sup> [https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/treaty\\_of\\_versailles-112018.pdf](https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/treaty_of_versailles-112018.pdf).

<sup>797</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>798</sup> J. Minakowski, *Baza Artykułów Dotyczących Plebiscytu na Warmii, Mazurach i Powislu*, op. cit., p.8-10; W. Brenda, *Polska czy Prusy Wschodnie? Przegrany plebiscyt*”, op. cit., p.75-76; A. Derda, *Kampania i przebieg plebiscytu z 11 lipca 1920 roku na Warmii i Mazurach w świetle materiałów tekstowych oraz ikonograficznych zamieszczonych w lokalnej prasie niemieckojęzycznej*”, op. cit., p. 1-2.

<sup>799</sup> “Boletín del día, polacos y alemanes”, ‘ABC’, 16.07.1920, p. 17.

Commission for Polish Affairs in the Peace Conference, from 6 to 9 March 1919, it was initially decided that “the Powiśle area must be utterly given to Poland. However, in the provinces of Olsztyn and Reszel in Warmia and the Southern Masurian provinces a plebiscite must be conducted” but, as this author also explains, after Lloyd George’s opposition to the idea of giving Powiśle to Poland and after Wilson’s support to the view held by the British prime minister, in the end, on May 7, 1919 the Supreme Council determined a plebiscite would also be conducted in Powiśle. Minakowski also explains that “in the end, in relation to the territories of Warmia, Masuria and Powiśle the ethnic rule prevailed over the arguments of strategic nature”<sup>800</sup>. When this author mentions strategic arguments he is referring to the Warsaw-Danzig railway line.

In his reports to State Ministry, Agüera only referred to the allied commission in singular, without mentioning that two allied commissions existed in the disputed territory. Minakowski explains that two separate allied commissions were created to operate in the plebiscite region with a delay regarding what was written on the Treaty (the Treaty of Versailles was valid since January 10, 1920 and these two commissions were supposed to be formed within the following 15 days), after the withdrawal of the German armies. One allied commission was created for the Olsztyn district, with its members arriving on February 11, 1920 and another one for the Kwidzyn district, whose members arrived on February 17, 1920. It is important to note that these two commissions had to rely on German civil servants to administrate the plebiscite region<sup>801</sup>. In addition, as Minakowski explains, due to a shortage of allied troops sent to the region in comparison with what the Supreme Council established, the allied commissions were not in the best position to defend the local Poles against German agitation<sup>802</sup>. In addition, Polish historian Waldemar Brenda explains that many concessions were made by the Interallied Commission to the German authorities of the plebiscite region, against what was established in the Versailles Treaty, such as, for example, allowing German civil servants to keep working in the region, what allowed them to operate again Polish interests by means of “agitation” and interference in the plebiscite.

Germany’s militarization is another of the threads that appear in the examined Spanish sources in relation with the plebiscite in Warmia, Masuria and Powiśle. On April 20, 1920 ‘La Correspondencia de España’ referred to one of the disputed areas included in the plebiscite, Marienwerder, [present-day Kwidzyn] in order to report and denounce that a process of

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<sup>800</sup> J. Minakowski, *Baza Artykułów Dotyczących Plebiscytu na Warmii, Mazurach i Powiślu*, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>801</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 11-12.

<sup>802</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 11.

militarization was taking place there, from which it can be inferred that ‘La Correspondencia de España’ claimed Germany used the plebiscite as a pretext for militarization<sup>803</sup>. The newspaper claimed that in a terrain inhabited by 150,000 people there were 10,000 men of the *Sicherheitswehr* and the *Einwohnerwehr* [the so-called City’s Defence paramilitary groups] which had been completely armed by the German Defence Ministry and were ready for mobilization. The pro-allied newspaper regarded this as a deception, because this action was against Germany’s obliged compliance with the Versailles Treaty. The newspaper’s editors referred to a few photos published on a Spanish newspaper, without mentioning which one and the publication date, of German soldiers disguised as peasants having a shooting training. In addition, the Spanish newspaper reckoned that Germany “wants to evade the Treaty of Versailles spirit and by manipulating the popular will, and to rebalance the balance in Eastern Europe to its favour” but the newspapers’ editors added that the Allied Commission would prevent this from happening<sup>804</sup>.

The aggressive agitation against local Poles conducted by German forces was both a cause and a consequence of Germany’s illegal militarization of the plebiscite region. Both Agüera, in one of his diplomatic reports<sup>805</sup>; as well as many years later, Polish historian Roszkowski’s account on the facts, referred to the terror generated by Germans in the plebiscite region<sup>806</sup>. On July 16, 1920 Agüera reported “unpleasant incidents” to Spain’s state minister, mentioning news from the region as his source<sup>807</sup>. Agüera detailed:

“In Marienvender [Marienwerder, currently Kwidzyn] a German demonstration entered violently in the Polish committee offices and obliged categorically its employees to remove the Polish flag from the balcony. The president of the mentioned committee was forced to yield and asked the allied commission for help, and the commission sent a peloton of Italian soldiers with the goal of defending those employees from the continuously growing wrath of the demonstrators. In Olsztyn the Germans removed the Polish eagle shield from the Polish consulate and walked around

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<sup>803</sup> “Informaciones del extranjero. El Plebiscito en Prusia Oriental”. ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 23.04.1920, p. 2.

<sup>804</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>805</sup> AHN, H1681, 16.07.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister.

<sup>806</sup> W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004, op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>807</sup> AHN, H1681, 16.07.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

the town streets with it shouting against Poland and against the Polish passer-bies:  
“Leave for Warsaw”<sup>808</sup>.

It is also important to explain that on April 19, 1920 Spain’s diplomatic representative in Poland had already reported to state minister that “the Masurian plebiscite region” asked the Entente governments to intervene against the “unfair decisions” made by the [interallied] plebiscite commission that were aimed at helping the Germans in the region. By the “Masurian plebiscite region”, in reality, Agüera referred to the Polish plebiscite committee in Olsztyn. The committee’s demands for the Entente, as reported by the Spanish diplomat, were the following:

“1. Dissolution of the *Sicherheitswehr* and reinforcement of the allied contingents, to date of 1,000 men per district. 2. Dissolution of all German associations, which, under an innocent name, are in reality nothing more than associations that function for a warlike purpose. 3. Immediate disarmament of the entire population 4. Imposition of punishments on all persons guilty of attacks on the Polish population”<sup>809</sup>.

In what could have perfectly been a reaction to the Polish committee’s demands, particularly to point 4 (imposition of punishments on all persons guilty of attacks on the Polish population), as ‘La Correspondencia de España’ explained on April 23, 1920, the first action by the Interallied Commission was to “sack the Pangermanist mayor of Allenstein, Herr Georg Zuelch, who in company of the military boss, had organized an attack against the Polish consulate in this city”<sup>810</sup>. ‘La Correspondencia de España’ also reported that the German administration created a climate of terror among Polish local population, which it wanted to keep active until the plebiscite was to take place<sup>811</sup>. In regard to this, Polish historian

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<sup>808</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “En Marienverder, una manifestación alemana entró violentamente en las oficinas del comité polaco y obligó categóricamente a sus empleados a que quitaran del balcón la bandera polaca. El presidente del mencionado comité. se vio obligado a ceder y pidió ayuda a la comisión aliada que mandó un pelotón de soldados italianos con objeto de defender a dichos empleados de la ira cada vez más creciente de los manifestantes. En Olsztyn también arrancaron los germanos el escudo con el águila polaca del consulado de dicha nación y se pasearon con él por las calles vociferando contra Polonia y contra los transeúntes polacos diciéndoles: “Iros a Varsovia”.

<sup>809</sup> *Ibidem*, 19.04.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor). Original quoted text: 1.Disolución de la *Sicherheitswehr* y refuerzo de los contingentes aliados hasta la fecha de 1000 hombres por distrito. 2.Disolución de todas las asociaciones alemanas, que, bajo un nombre inocente, no son en realidad más que asociaciones que funcionan con un fin bélico. 3.Desarme inmediato de toda la población. 4.Imposición de castigos a todas las personas culpables de atentados hacia la población polaca”.

<sup>810</sup> “Informaciones del extranjero. El Plebiscito en Prusia Oriental”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 23.04.1920, p. 2.

<sup>811</sup> *Ibidem*.

Roszkowski explains that “German guerrillas created terror among Polish population”, and gives the murder of Bogumił Link, a Polish social worker, as an example. Roszkowski also writes that Germany placed the police, *Sicherheitsweh*, and the *Einwohnerwehr* in the plebiscite area, as a reaction to the two allied commissions established in the disputed Eastern Prussian territory<sup>812</sup>. Polish historian Waldemar Brenda, meanwhile, explains that: “the German army officially withdrew from the provinces subjected to the voting, but part of the personnel obtained holidays for a few months and stayed on their place, keeping their access to the generously equipped, secret weapon warehouses. This way thousands of young men entered paramilitary organizations and militia”<sup>813</sup>. These paramilitary groups of the *Einwohnerwehr* is to what probably Foreign Affairs Minister Stanisław Patek referred in his conversation with Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw, Agüera, in March 1920. As the Spanish diplomat reported on March 26, in Patek’s view, the German armed corps in the region placed Italian troops in danger<sup>814</sup>. In relation to this, Minakowski explains that a company of Italians was sent to Olsztyn along with an Irish battalion, and also an Italian battalion was sent to Kwidzyn along a French division<sup>815</sup>.

Kaczmarek argues that the influence in the plebiscite region of both the Warsaw-created Polish plebiscite committee, headquartered in Olsztyn and Kwidzyn, and the Masurian Popular Union was “not big” and was clearly outsized by the German Plebiscite Committee, namely the *Ostdeutsche Heimatdienst* (East German Motherland Service) which, with a membership of 200.000, had many more resources for propaganda activities than the Polish organizations. Kaczmarek also highlights that this propaganda was “conducted in a moment of threat for Poland’s statehood during the Soviet offensive to Warsaw”. As the same author explains, Poland won the plebiscite by majority in only 13 communes and this led to the fact that only 8 municipalities, 5 in Powiśle and 3 in Masuria, were conceded to Poland and “the border was established along the Eastern shore of the river Vistula”. He also explains that in the plebiscite voting cards, voters had two options, “Poland” and “Germany” but in the case of the second option they also saw the words “Eastern Prussia”, what, in Kaczmarek’s view, “additionally

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<sup>812</sup> W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004*, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>813</sup> W. Brenda, *Polska czy Prusy Wschodnie, przegrany plebiscyt*, *op. cit.*, p.80. Original quoted text: „Niemieckie wojsko oficjalnie wycofało się z powiatów objętych głosowaniem, ale część kadry uzyskała na kilka miesięcy urlopy i pozostała na miejscu, zachowując dostęp do obficie wyposażonych, tajnych magazynów broni. W ten sposób tysiące młodych mężczyzn weszło w skład organizacji paramilitarnych i bojówek”.

<sup>814</sup> AHN, H1681, 26.03.1920. Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O’Lawlor).

<sup>815</sup> J. Minakowski, *Baza Artykułów Dotyczących Plebiscytu na Warmii, Mazurach i Powiślu*, *op. cit.*, p. 11.



attracted the Evangelic population of Masuria and Warmia to vote for belonging to the known for centuries little motherland, Eastern Prussia”<sup>816</sup>. Brenda, meanwhile, mentions that only the options “Poland” and “Eastern Prussia” were visible, without Germany<sup>817</sup>. Kaczmarek also lists as one of the causes of Germany’s victory in the plebiscite the fact that around 100,000 people who were born in the region but lived in Germany were brought to the region on purpose so that they could vote in the plebiscite. However, as the main reason for Poland’s defeat in the plebiscite, Kaczmarek points out “the pro-Germany attitudes of most inhabitants, strongly linked for centuries, despite their Slavic roots, to the German cultural circle”. The plebiscite results given by Kaczmarek include a 3.4% of total votes for Poland, being the votes in favour of belonging to Poland 2.1% in the Olsztyn district and 7.5% in the Kwidzyn district<sup>818</sup>.

It must be explained that Spanish conservative and Germanophile newspaper ‘ABC’ argued that the plebiscite would be won by Germany if the voting would take place in a free setting, because the pro-Polish “fever” had diminished since the end of the war. The newspaper added that, after seeing that in areas already annexed by Poland, such as Poznań, local Poles already missed the German good organization they used to have, in the disputed regions of Eastern Prussia this would be taken into account when deciding their vote on one or another state<sup>819</sup>. It is logical that a Germanophile newspaper like ‘ABC’ conveyed the message that Masurians and Warmians thought that they would be in a better socio-economic situation under Germany than under Poland. Although not because of the last economy-related reason, in all the academic works consulted, the authors argue that Poland had no chance to win this plebiscite, even in the case that the German authorities had not conducted agitation against Poles or had not attempted to manipulate the plebiscite taking advantage of the local population links with Eastern Prussia and Germany. In addition, most of the consulted literature sources do not see propaganda, voting fraud and the Polish-Soviet War as the main causes of the Polish defeat in the voting. For instance, Norman Davies argues that despite “German skulduggery” allegedly occurring, this was not the reason for Germany’s victory<sup>820</sup>. Meanwhile, Tadeusz Kisielewski claims that “even without any type of anti-Polish moves by the local German authorities before and during the plebiscite, the Polish side would not have won it”. He argues that for the Masurians the religious aspect of their identities as Evangelists was more important

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<sup>816</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>817</sup> W. Brenda, *Polska czy Prusy Wschodnie, przegrany plebiscyt*, op. cit., p. 82.

<sup>818</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>819</sup> “Boletín del día. Los plebiscitos”, ‘ABC’, 22.04.1920, p. 13.

<sup>820</sup> N. Davies, *God’s Playground. A history of Poland, Volume II, 1795 to the present*, Oxford 2005, p. 371.

than their possible language identity or national identity as Poles. Kisiielewski also refers to a possible impact of the difficult war situation of Poland, against the Bolsheviks, on the voting decision of the local population in the plebiscite area. However, this author clearly does not see this fact as the main reason for Poland's defeat<sup>821</sup>.

Similarly as scholars did many years later, back then Agüera claimed it was impossible for Poland to win the plebiscite even if there had not been German propaganda and "violence against the Polish population in such regions". In addition, Agüera stated that if these incidents happened in the plebiscite region, without anyone preventing them from occurring, this was a proof that the number of Polish subjects in the region was much lower than the number of German subjects, so, in his view, it was not surprising at all that Poland lost the plebiscite<sup>822</sup>.

A different and additional perspective is provided by Roszkowski, who argues that the Polish government did not support the Polish cause best interest to win the plebiscite in Warmia and Masuria as much as in the case of Upper Silesia<sup>823</sup>.

It is also important to underline that in his reports to Spain's State Ministry, Agüera not only referred to the political events in the Eastern Prussia's plebiscite, but also to reactions to those in Warsaw's political scene. For example, on July 7, 1920 Agüera reported to state minister that a day earlier the Polish Sejm had made a declaration, about the Masuria and Warmia plebiscite, that was sent to the allied countries parliaments, and he pasted the content of the declaration, without commenting on it. In fact, it is difficult to determine why Agüera did not make any comment about the Sejm's declaration on the report he sent to State Minister. About the Sejm meeting mentioned by Agüera, it is worth accounting on Piotr Stawecki's explanation that on the Sejm meeting of July 6, 1920 "the deputy of the National Popular Union [Endecja, National Democrats] Ludwik Gdyk submitted his request to send an appeal by the Sejm Ustawodawczy [Legislative Sejm] to the parliaments of the Western allied powers with the goal of postponing the plebiscite"<sup>824</sup>. As Stawecki explains, the Polish right-wing deputy referred to the parliaments of USA, Great Britain, Belgium, France, Japan and Italy and his

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<sup>821</sup> T. Kisiielewski, *Wielka Wojna i niepodległość Polski*, *op. cit.*, p. 267. Original quoted words: "nawet bez różnego rodzaju antypolskich posunięć miejscowych władz niemieckich, poprzedzających plebiscyt i towarzyszących mu, strona polska by go nie wygrała".

<sup>822</sup> AHN, H1681, 16.07.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>823</sup> W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004*, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>824</sup> P. Stawecki, *Stanowisko Sejmu Ustawodawczego wobec plebiscytu na Warmii, Mazurach i Powislu w roku 1920*. „Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie” nr 4, 1971, p. 451-465. [https://bazhum.muzhp.pl/media/files/Komunikaty\\_Mazursko\\_Warmińskie/Komunikaty\\_Mazursko\\_Warmińskie-r1971-t-n4/Komunikaty\\_Mazursko\\_Warmińskie-r1971-t-n4-s451-465/Komunikaty\\_Mazursko\\_Warmińskie-r1971-t-n4-s451-465.pdf](https://bazhum.muzhp.pl/media/files/Komunikaty_Mazursko_Warmińskie/Komunikaty_Mazursko_Warmińskie-r1971-t-n4/Komunikaty_Mazursko_Warmińskie-r1971-t-n4-s451-465/Komunikaty_Mazursko_Warmińskie-r1971-t-n4-s451-465.pdf) [Accessed on 25.03.2022]

intention was that those parliaments force the local governments to prevent the plebiscite from taking place in the disputed area on July 11, 1920. Stawecki adds that “deputy Gdyk advised presenting the difficult political situation of Poland in the appeal to the allied countries parliaments” and explains that Gdyk’s request was accepted by the majority of the Sejm<sup>825</sup>. This appeal did not achieve its goal and the plebiscite took place, as planned, on July 11. The text of the appeal or declaration sent by the Sejm to the Western Powers’ parliaments was the following:

“At an extremely difficult moment for the Polish Nation, which with its breasts stops the march of the Bolsheviks across Europe, Poland must use all its material and moral strength to save itself and the civilized world from the flood of anarchy. At the moment, an almost superhuman effort to run the already appointed plebiscites in Warmia, Masuria and on the right bank of the Vistula, which require special attention and peace, cannot give just results that would correspond to the essential wishes of the people of these lands. Therefore, the Legislative Sejm of Poland is appealing to all parliaments of the Allied States with a fervent appeal that, in the name of the slogans of justice, they should influence their Governments to postpone the dates of these plebiscites until the Polish Nation is able to participate in the peaceful and just conduct of the plebiscites. The Polish Diet hopes that this vote will be heard by the representatives of free democratic nations of the world”<sup>826</sup>.

Both Agüera’s diplomatic correspondence to Spain’s State Ministry and the examined Spanish press sources refer to German propaganda in the region. In relation to this, as already mentioned, most of the consulted literature sources do not see propaganda as one of the main

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<sup>825</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>826</sup> *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne ze 159 posiedzenia Sejmu Ustawodawczego z dnia 6 lipca 1920 r.* Firstly accessed on [https://bs.sejm.gov.pl/exlibris/aleph/a22\\_1/apache\\_media/J15FJVHPCVHTBXN81IJFTEINQMURTE.pdf](https://bs.sejm.gov.pl/exlibris/aleph/a22_1/apache_media/J15FJVHPCVHTBXN81IJFTEINQMURTE.pdf) [23.03.2022, link dead on 31.07.2023]. New link accessed on 31.07.2023 <http://bc.umcs.pl/dlibra/publication/8949/edition/7234?language=pl>. Original quoted text: “W chwili niezmiernie ciężkiej dla Narodu Polskiego, który swemi piersiami wstrzymuje pochód bolszewików na całą Europę, Polska musi wyteńczyć wszystkie swe materialne i moralny siły dla ratowania siebie i świata cywilizowanego przed zalewem anarchji. W tej chwili nadludzkiego niemal wysiłku przeprowadzenie wyznaczonych już plebiscytów na Warmii, Mazurach i na prawym brzegu Wisły wymagających szczególnej uwagi i spokoju, nie może dać wyników sprawiedliwych, któreby odpowiadały istotnym życzeniom ludności tych ziem. Wobec tego Sejm Ustawodawczy Polski zwraca się do wszystkich parlamentów Państw Sprzymierzonych z gorącym wyzwaniem, ażeby w imię hasła sprawiedliwości wpłynęły na swoje Rządy w kierunku odroczenia terminów tych plebiscytów, do chwili, gdy Naród Polski będzie w możności wzięcia udziału w spokojnym i sprawiedliwym przeprowadzeniu plebiscytów. Sejm Polski ma nadzieję, że ten głos znajdzie oddźwięk w przedstawicielach wolnych demokratycznych narodów świata”.

causes of Polish defeat. Agüera claimed it was impossible for Poland to win the plebiscite even if there had not been German propaganda. He reported, however, that the German propaganda was very significant and German violence in the region was a reality<sup>827</sup>. Granzów also stated that “this plebiscite is the one that has to prove to which nationality the Masurians want to belong and show as well the successes achieved by the German propaganda for so many centuries”<sup>828</sup>. In relation to this, it must be also mentioned that Granzów claimed the Germans systematically made a propagandistic effort to “convince the Masurians that they were not Polish” based on the argument that these were Protestants and not Catholics, spoke Polish differently than Poles and used Gothic letters<sup>829</sup>.

References to a voting fraud or manipulation committed by the Germans in the plebiscite region are found both in the Spanish press and in the consulted literature. British-Polish renowned historian Norman Davies explains that “Polish charges against German skulduggery, in particular against the fraudulent manufacture of outvoters”, were a reality<sup>830</sup>. ‘El Liberal’'s columnist Mateo claimed, regarding German manipulation of the plebiscite, that for every 10 Poles in reality there were 0.25 Germans in the disputed region. “You can multiply this fraction by the Germans that died in those lands since 50 or 60 years ago and you will have the exact result or product of the clandestine voting [...]. This procedure does not fail, is very sure”, Mateo added<sup>831</sup>.

It is worth adding that Agüera reported to state minister that during the Masuria and Warmia plebiscite, lost by Poland, according to the press section of Poland's Foreign Affairs Ministry, in Kwidzyn there were “abuses” against the Polish population by the city's national council, and Agüera mentioned that Poles reported the “vote counting was not secret” and falsification and acts disappearance took place. However, ‘ABC’ newspaper stated that “against the inhabitants’ interest and wishes, the coercions, false lists and arbitrary elimination of voters

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<sup>827</sup> AHN, H1681, 16.07.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Agüera to state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>828</sup> “Desde Polonia. El problema del Báltico (de nuestro redactor especial) II”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 20.03.1920, p. 1. Original quoted text: “este plebiscito es el que tiene que demostrar a qué nacionalidad quieren pertenecer los mazures, a la vez que los éxitos realizados por la propaganda alemana durante tantos siglos”.

<sup>829</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>830</sup> N. Davies, *God's Playground. A history of Poland, Volume II, 1795 to the present, op. cit.*, p. 371.

<sup>831</sup> “Berlín, plebiscitos y camamas”, ‘El Liberal’, 12.08.1920, p.3. Original quoted text: “Multipliquen ustedes esa fracción por los alemanes fallecidos en aquellas tierras desde hace cincuenta o sesenta años y tendrán el producto y resultado exacto de la votadura clandestina [...]. No falla este procedimiento. Es segurísimo”.

are put in play”. In addition, ‘ABC’ criticised that “the plebiscite for the principle of nations’ will to succeed, is to be organized in such conditions”<sup>832</sup>.

The religious identification of the local population in the plebiscite area was mentioned by Spanish press contributors and the academic authors that have been consulted, as an important aspect to be considered in relation with the territorial dispute: Kisielewski argues that for the Masurians the religious aspect of their identities as Evangelists (Protestants) was more important than their possible language or national identity as Poles<sup>833</sup>, whereas on ‘La Correspondencia de España’ Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda claimed that Germans systematically made a propagandistic effort to “convince the Masurians that they were not Polish”, based on the argument that these were Protestants and not Catholics<sup>834</sup>. In relation to Protestantism in the disputed region, ‘El Liberal’'s Manuel Mateo Campos explained that Bismarck sent German protestants from Hanover, Brunswick and Brandenburg as migrants to “badly named Eastern Prussia”, an area, which, in his view, was part of Poland and “excellently Catholic”<sup>835</sup>. Similarly, Granzów de la Cerda also highlighted that in Warmia the local population not only spoke Polish but also was Catholic<sup>836</sup>. It is worth noting Manuel Mateo was not completely aware or on purpose did not want to write that the Masurian district population was mostly Lutheran at the time.

References to ethnic aspects are also found in the examined sources. For instance, in order to justify the Polishness of the disputed region, Granzów explained that the Eastern Prussian countryside inhabitants “belong to the Polish race of Masurians”<sup>837</sup>. However, as Polish historian Ryszard Kaczmarek explains, Poland, in order to claim the disputed region, not only used the language or ethnicity argument but also a historical one: “the belonging to the Polish Rzeczpospolita [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth] before 1772 of the bishoprics of Warmia and Powiśle, (as part of Royal Prussia [Western Prussia])”<sup>838</sup>. In tight connection with ethnographic aspects, Germanization throughout the recent history of the region is one of the topics connected to the plebiscite in Eastern Prussia that appears more often across the analysed

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<sup>832</sup> “Boletín del día. Los plebiscitos”, ‘ABC’, 22.04.1920, p. 13.

<sup>833</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i niepodległość Polski*, op. cit., p. 267.

<sup>834</sup> “Desde Polonia. El problema del Báltico (de nuestro redactor especial) II”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 20.03.1920, p. 1.

<sup>835</sup> “Berlín, plebiscitos y camamas”, ‘El Liberal’, 12.08.1920, p. 3.

<sup>836</sup> “Desde Polonia. El problema del Báltico (de nuestro redactor especial) II”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 20.03.1920, p. 1.

<sup>837</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>838</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, op. cit., p.106.

Spanish sources. For instance, 'La Correspondencia de España' argued that "in the whole country [Eastern Prussia] the Prussian administration, made up of militarized civil servants that Berlin's Imperial government used to send to the Polish districts with the mission of Germanizing them by all means, remains"<sup>839</sup>. 'El Liberal's Manuel Mateo used the word 'colonization' to refer to the process by which Bismarck, with whom 'El Liberal's correspondent was very critical, sent German Protestant migrants from other parts of the Reich to Eastern Prussia. Mateo also claimed that Poles in the region were mistreated by Germans and were enhanced to migrate "beyond the border drawn by the great Frederik in the time of the Poland partition". He also stated Germans forbid the Polish language in the region and, in relation to this fact, he accused Germans of "[...]insulting Spain in their history and literature books for having discovered the new world and not having given it away to them [...]"<sup>840</sup>.

It is at this point a good idea to explain that in his 1919 book, based on his May 5, 1919 lecture at Spain's Royal Geographical Society in Madrid, Polish archaeologist and ethnographer Eugeniusz Frankowski argued that the population increase that the Polish lands experienced since the 19th century, which had caused emigration of Poles to Germany, was also the cause of "the powerful force of the population that has ensured to the Polish people the peaceful victory in the German occupation territories", in a clear reference to Greater Poland and probably Upper Silesia as well<sup>841</sup>. However, it can be argued this was not the demographic reality in Warmia and Masuria, where local residents identifying themselves as Poles were not such an overwhelming majority.

It is also relevant to highlight that Frankowski claimed that Germany could not apply the command given by Bismarck to the Germans, "fight the Poles until they feel disgusted with life" as a government policy<sup>842</sup>. This reality mentioned by Frankowski can be applied both to the Polish lands occupied by the Central Powers during the Great War and to post-Great War reality in all the disputed lands, partly or predominantly inhabited by Poles, that were part of the German Empire before the global conflict.

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<sup>839</sup> "Informaciones del extranjero. El Plebiscito en Prusia Oriental", 'La Correspondencia de España', 23.04.1920, p. 2. Original quoted text: "En todo el país subsiste todavía la Administración prusiana, formada por funcionarios militarizados que el Gobierno imperial de Berlín mandaba a los distritos polacos con la misión de germanizarlos por todos los medios".

<sup>840</sup> "Berlin, plebiscitos y camamas", 'El Liberal', 12.08.1920, p.3. Original quoted text: "[...]que insultan a España en sus libros de historia y de literatura por el mero hecho de haber descubierto el Nuevo Mundo y no habérselo regalado luego a ellos[...]".

<sup>841</sup> E. Frankowski, *Polonia y su misión en Europa*, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>842</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 8-9.

Despite the overwhelming German victory, it is worth looking at the results of the plebiscite across the examined sources. The plebiscite result given by Davies is 460.000 votes (96.52%) for Germany and 16.000 (3.47%) for Poland<sup>843</sup>. The same results are given by Kaczmarek, who mentions a 3.4% of total votes for Poland, being the votes in favour of belonging to Poland 2.1% in the Olsztyn district and 7.5% in the Kwidzyn district<sup>844</sup>. Kisielewski mentions 93000 votes for Germany and 8000 votes for Poland in the Kwidzyn region and 363000 votes for Germany and 8000 for Poland in the Olsztyn region, what makes 472.000 thousand total votes (12000 more than Davies's figure) and a 3.39% of votes for Poland<sup>845</sup>. 'ABC', meanwhile, reported 95000 votes for Germany and 7000 for Poland as the plebiscite's result, which means a 6.86% of the votes were in favour of Poland<sup>846</sup>. This would mean 'ABC's numbers in reality, when comparing with others in other sources, referred only to the Kwidzyn district and gave a lower value of votes for Poland and higher value to votes for Germany in that district than in the numbers presented by Kisielewski and Kaczmarek.

Significant differences regarding the number of Poles that inhabited the disputed plebiscite are also found across the examined sources. 'La Correspondencia de España' claimed that the southern part of Eastern Prussia was "inhabited by 1.000.000 Poles". Agüera highlighted that Poland lost the plebiscite simply because there was more German population than Polish population in the plebiscite area. He mentioned a 97.5% of German population and 2.5% of Poles, "according to German statistics". However, in reality Agüera was not referring to population statistics but to the plebiscite results, instead. These results given by Agüera are in reality the exact same numbers Minakowski gives as the result of the plebiscite in Warmia and Masuria, even though it should be confirmed whether these numbers included the voting result in the Powiśle area or not<sup>847</sup>. El Liberal's Mateo claimed that around 600.000 Poles lived in this "borderland"<sup>848</sup>. 'La Correspondencia de España' claimed that in the Kwidzyn district there were 150,000 inhabitants, out of which 10,000 men of the *Sicherheitswehr* and the *Einwohnerwehr*, without mentioning how many of them were Poles<sup>849</sup>. As already mentioned, 'El Liberal's correspondent in Berlin Manuel Mateo claimed that for every 10 Poles in the region there were 0.25 Germans<sup>850</sup>. Minakowski gives the figure of 440.000 ethnic Poles out

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<sup>843</sup> N. Davies, *God's Playground. A history of Poland, Volume II, 1795 to the present*, op. cit., p. 371.

<sup>844</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>845</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i niepodległość Polski*, op. cit., p. 267.

<sup>846</sup> "Boletín del día, polacos y alemanes", 'ABC', 16.07.1920, p. 17.

<sup>847</sup> J. Minakowski, *Baza Artykułów Dotyczących Plebiscytu na Warmii, Mazurach i Powiślu*, op. cit. p. 16.

<sup>848</sup> "Berlin, plebisictos y camamas", 'El Liberal', 12.08.1920, p. 3.

<sup>849</sup> "En Alemania. La importante cuestión del desarme", 'La Correspondencia de España', 20.04.1920, p. 1.

<sup>850</sup> "Berlin, plebisictos y camamas", 'El Liberal', 12.08.1920, p. 3.

of a total population of 720.000 living in the plebiscite area, which would mean a 61% out of the total<sup>851</sup>.

Both Waldemar Brenda and Ryszard Kaczmarek explain that many local Masurians and Warmians who lived in other parts of Germany like Westphalia or Berlin, were enhanced to travel to their home towns to vote. Brenda mentions these could amount to 157,000 in the Olsztyn district and 30,000 in the Powiśle region. The author claims that despite having a clear impact on the final voting results, this was not a decisive factor for German victory<sup>852</sup>. Kaczmarek writes that around 100,000 people who were born in the region but lived in Germany were brought to the region for the purpose of winning the plebiscite. He sees this fact as one of the causes of Germany's victory in the plebiscite<sup>853</sup>.

### **The impact of the Polish-Soviet War in the Warmia-Masuria plebiscite**

The influence that the Polish-Soviet War situation, which endangered the further existence of the Polish state, could have had in the final result of the Eastern Prussian plebiscite is not mentioned in the examined Spanish sources. In other words, neither Spanish press commentators nor Spain's top diplomatic representative in Warsaw did connect the Polish Soviet War directly with Eastern Prussia's plebiscite. However, in the consulted literature this connection is made. Kisielewski refers to a possible impact on the voting decision of the plebiscite area populations of the difficult war situation of Poland against the Bolsheviks. However, clearly this author does not see this fact as the main reason for Poland's defeat<sup>854</sup>. Meanwhile, Davies also explains that allied troops were taken away by the Entente from the plebiscite area, due to the proximity of Soviet Russian troops, "because of fear of being politically contaminated by the Red Army" and adds that in the areas occupied by the Bolsheviks near the Eastern Prussian plebiscite area, "the Soviet commanders expressed their government's belief that this "ancient German land" should be returned to its rightful owners"<sup>855</sup>. Kaczmarek highlights that this propaganda was "conducted in a moment of threat

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<sup>851</sup> J. Minakowski, *Baza Artykułów Dotyczących Plebiscytu na Warmii, Mazurach i Powiślu*, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>852</sup> W. Brenda, *Polska czy Prusy Wschodnie, przegrany plebiscyt*, op. cit. p. 85.

<sup>853</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989*, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>854</sup> T. Kisielewski, *Wielka Wojna i niepodległość Polski*, op. cit., p. 267.

<sup>855</sup> N. Davies, *God's Playground. A history of Poland, Volume II, 1795 to the present*, op. cit., p. 371.



for Poland's statehood during the Soviet Russian offensive to Warsaw"<sup>856</sup>. From his side, Roszkowski highlights that when the plebiscite took place "the Red Army approached the borders of Eastern Prussia. This generated the impression on the Polish population of Warmia and Masuria that the days of independent Poland are counting down"<sup>857</sup>.

### **The plebiscite date**

Another aspect reflected in the examined Spanish sources is the plebiscite date and whether if it had been postponed it would have generated a different result. On April 14, 1920 the date of the plebiscite was confirmed for July 11, 1920 by the Entente's Ambassadors Council<sup>858</sup>. On April 19 Agüera reported to State Minister that Polish Masurians complained about July 11 as the date for plebiscite because it was too soon for them to be able to prepare a campaign to promote the vote in favour of the region's belonging to Poland<sup>859</sup>. On June 2, 1920, 'in a headline for a press note from Berlin, *La Correspondencia de España*' wondered if the Eastern Prussia plebiscite would be postponed<sup>860</sup>. According to this pro-allied newspaper, it was in Germany's best interest to celebrate the plebiscite as soon as possible but the Interallied Commission was not in such a hurry<sup>861</sup>. On April 22, 1920 'ABC' reported that Poland complained about the conditions of the East Prussian plebiscite and asked for a delay of the plebiscite until the German civil servants in the area would be "sacked", what the newspaper interpreted stating that "its [Poland's] agents have not had the time to prepare the victory"<sup>862</sup>. On July 16, the fact that Poles had wanted to postpone the plebiscite, and that, in the view of Polish leaders, a later plebiscite date could change the result of the voting, made 'ABC' sarcastically argue:

"Maybe the summer has had an influence, Poles are only on their national state in the snow season. Because of the heat, the thousands of Poles of Eastern Prussia that are missing to

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<sup>856</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1918-1989*, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>857</sup> R. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004*, op. cit., p. 30. Original quoted text: "[...]gdym Armia czerwona zbliżała się do granicy Prus wschodnich. Sprawilo to na polskiej ludności Warmii i Mazur wrażenie, że dni niepodległej Polski są policzone".

<sup>858</sup> J. Minakowski, *Baza Artykułów Dotyczących Plebiscytu na Warmii, Mazurach i Powiślu*, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>859</sup> AHN, H1681, 19.04.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's state minister Marquis of Lema.

<sup>860</sup> "Los plebiscitos en Prusia. ¿Serán aplazados?", 'La Correspondencia de España', 2.06.1920, p. 2.

<sup>861</sup> "Informaciones del extranjero. El Plebiscito en Prusia Oriental", 'La Correspondencia de España', 23.04.1920, p. 2.

<sup>862</sup> "Boletín del día. Los plebiscitos", 'ABC', 22.04.1920, p. 13.

win in the voting, did not manage to go voting”<sup>863</sup>. It can be interpreted that one of the reasons why Poland wanted the plebiscite to be postponed, apart from the situation in the Polish-Soviet War, was to ensure a peaceful climate in the disputed plebiscite region given the terror climate that the German paramilitary groups and police generated against Polish citizens in the plebiscite area during the first months of 1920.

### **Geopolitical aspects of the Warmia-Masuria dispute**

Among the analysed Spanish sources, only ‘La Correspondencia de España’ paid attention to the geopolitical significance of the plebiscite region, at least of its Masurian part, because of it being a lake region. The disputed region was, in the newspaper’s view, Poland’s natural and ethnographic border, and the pro-allied newspaper highlighted that the Masurian Lakes were a geopolitical protection for Poland against a potential invasion from Germany through Eastern Prussia<sup>864</sup>. It cannot be denied that in case of a Polish victory in the plebiscite, Masuria and Warmia would become a buffer territory that would work for the new Polish state as a barrier against Germany’s expansionists ambitions within the former’s own territory.

On July 16, 1920, five days after the plebiscite, Spanish Germanophile newspaper ‘ABC’ accused the Peace Conference diplomats of having made the decision to remove direct Germany’s sovereignty from a part of Eastern Prussia and initially assigned the disputed territory to Poland due to a lack of knowledge of the ethnographic and geographic reality of the region, which didn’t allow them to have the chance to compare their knowledge against Polish arguments and theories regarding the ethnographic and geographic aspects of the disputed region <sup>865</sup>. It can be interpreted that ‘ABC’ used its comment on the result of the plebiscite as an opportunity to criticise the whole territorial dispute approach by the Entente.

As Roszkowski explains, on August 12, 1920, as a result of the July 11 plebiscite, “the Ambassadors Council in Paris recognized the existent border of Eastern Prussia, giving to Poland only small scraps of land in Masuria and by the Vistula river”<sup>866</sup>. No explicit references have been found to this official German-Polish border recognition on the own texts of Spanish

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<sup>863</sup> “Boletín del día, polacos y alemanes”, ‘ABC’, 16.07.1920, p. 17. Original quoted text: “Quizá haya influido el verano, los polacos no están en su elemento más que en la estación de las nieves. Con el calor, los miles de polacos de la Prusia oriental que faltan para vencer a la votación alemana no pudieron ir a emitir sufragio”.

<sup>864</sup> “Informaciones del extranjero. El Plebiscito en Prusia Oriental”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 23.04.1920, p. 2.

<sup>865</sup> “Boletín del día, polacos y alemanes”, ‘ABC’, 16.07.1920, p. 17.

<sup>866</sup> W. Roszkowski, *Historia Polski 1914-2004, op. cit.*, p. 30.

newspapers or in Agüera's reports, from what we can infer the plebiscite result was what was taken into consideration as the dispute closing event by Spain's diplomacy and press. Granzów did not make any reference to the Ambassadors Council decision, either.

## **Conclusions**

In conclusion, the focus by Agüera and Spain's press contributors was on the ethnographic, linguistic, religious reality of the region, German propaganda, the sending of migrants to the region for voting, and, overall, the difficult conditions, from a Polish point of view, in which the plebiscite took place. A significant importance was given by Spanish commentators of the Warmo-Masurian question to the historical efforts of Germanization of the local population in the disputed region. However, Agüera, as well as all the consulted scholars and most Spanish commentators, (Granzów did not claim anything like this clearly) was convinced that Poland would have lost the plebiscite without German propaganda, violence and data manipulation and without the Polish-Soviet War, anyway.

It is also worth highlighting that in no moment did the top Spanish diplomatic representative in Warsaw clearly write whether the region, in his view, should belong either to Poland or to Germany.

## **Chapter 2 Conclusions**

A clear division of views between Germanophile and pro-allied press is visible in regard to the conflicts in which Poland was engaged with Germany and Czechoslovakia, regarding the northern, southern and western borders of the new state. The abundant usage of demographic, ethnographic, economic and historical arguments to support the belonging of the disputed territories either to Poland or to Germany or to Czechoslovakia is seen in the texts of Spanish press editors and contributors, as well as in reports from Spain's diplomatic mission in Warsaw to Spain's state minister.

An enormous focus in the Spanish press and the diplomatic reports sent by Contreras and Agüera was placed on the Entente's attitudes and decisions, as well as on the League of Nations, in regard to the territorial disputes, over the northern, southern and western borders, that Poland had to face.

In early 1919 Spanish diplomacy did not see the Poznań region (Greater Poland) as a Polish territory, but as a disputed territory. Moreover, both Casanova and Bueno saw the Greater Poland conflict as a German question, connected to the ongoing German political processes, although Casanova regarded the region as Polish while Bueno regarded it as German. Most Spanish newspapers and their contributors did not see the Greater Poland Uprising as an improvised local movement but rather as an operation conducted by Poland and instigated by the Entente, so that the peace conference have no choice but to assign the region to Poland.

Agüera showed, although not with a lot of clarity, that he supported a Cieszyn Silesia solution favourable to Poland and criticised the French pro-Czechoslovakian stand. Both Agüera and Spanish press editors and contributors saw the coal richness of the region as one of the main reasons behind Poland's and Czechoslovakia's big interest in possessing the disputed territory. Many references in Spanish press and diplomacy to coal as one of the reasons for the dispute are also seen in the case of the Upper Silesian conflict.

The Upper Silesian question had a large reception in the Spanish press and on Agüera's reports, even though very little attention was paid in both cases to the Silesian Uprisings. A large attention was paid in Spain to Upper Silesia's economic and geopolitical significance, to the violence episodes taking place in the region, the role of the German migrants votes' in the plebiscite, and to the plebiscite results, which were interpreted differently across newspapers.

Casanova was sceptical about the role given by the Entente to Poland in Danzig and Granzów enthusiastically advocated for a Polish Danzig, whereas Agüera supported Britain's management of the Free City, believed in a Poland-Free City cooperation and criticised Poland's intransigent attitude in regard to its control of Danzig. On to a separate matter, a rumour in Danzig that Spain had promoted a vote among Latin American countries in the League of Nations Council in favour of closing Danzig's rifle factory placed Spain's consul in the city and Spanish diplomacy in an uncomfortable situation, which State Ministry believed could damage Spain's relations with Poland as well.

It can be also stated, making an overview, that Spanish press commentators in Polish affairs advocated Poland's claims on Eastern Prussia and Danzig less than Polish claims on Upper Silesia and Greater Poland.

# CHAPTER 3: SPAIN AND POLAND'S EASTERN BORDER 1918-1921

## Introduction

By the end of 1918 Poland resurrected as a political entity thanks to the disintegration of Central and Eastern Europe's three great empires during and by the end of the Great War, but in its beginnings, the new Polish state did not have defined borders yet. The Treaty of Versailles only established the western border of the new state with Germany in the Poznań region and in Pomerania. As a result, due to its ambition to acquire all the lands (more or less, depending on the political conception) inhabited by Poles, the new, reborn Polish Republic got involved in a series of territorial disputes and armed conflicts with its neighbouring states and nationalities in the East until 1921, that is, simplifying it a bit, with Soviet Russia, Lithuania and Ukraine<sup>867</sup>. These conflicts were not resolved by plebiscites or by the Entente, but by military realities generated by war between Poland and its Eastern neighbouring nations, although the Ambassadors Council eventually recognized Poland's eastern borders in 1923.

Poland's fight for its eastern borders generated many reactions in Spain, some of them very critical of Poland's attitude. A larger focus on military aspects and the ongoing development of armed conflicts is logically found in the press comments and diplomatic reports on the eastern border conflicts, than in the case of the western, southern and northern border conflicts. Gutiérrez de Agüera's comments on the military situation in the eastern border fronts were very detailed and updated thanks to first-hand information obtained from Poland's Foreign Affairs Ministry.

One could argue that, overall, the conflicts regarding the western, southern and northern borders of the new Polish state generated a meaningful impact in Spain, even more in the press than in State's Ministry, but the eastern border conflicts generated concern and heated comments in the press. The Polish-Ukraine conflict over Eastern Galicia was not a top question in Spain but the Polish-Lithuanian conflict ended up involving Spain (as it will be explained below) and the Polish-Soviet War had enormous impacts in both Spain's press and Spanish diplomatic spheres.

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<sup>867</sup> See: M. Wołos, *Kilka refleksji na temat politycznych aspektów walki o kształt polskiej granicy wschodniej*, [in:] *Zwycięski pokój czy rozejm na pokolenie? Traktat ryski z perspektywy 100 lat*, red. Z. Girzyński, J. Kłaczkow, Warszawa 2022, p. 19-32.

It would not be risky to claim that the eastern border conflicts were a more complex reality, due to the ethnographic and historical complexity of the Eastern borderlands, than the western, northern and southern border conflicts for most Spanish press editors, contributors and correspondents (with the exception of Sofía Casanova and perhaps, into a lesser extent, Ramiro de Maeztu), as well as for Spain's diplomacy.

In his paper on the international context of the 1918-1921 Polish independence consolidation process, Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski accurately summarizes such complexity regarding the eastern border of the new Polish state and claims that: "the ideas on where to set Poland's borders were related to the boundaries of the Polish-Lithuanian Republic before its first partition in 1772, but it was obvious that the appearance and strengthening of modern national movements in Ukraine and Lithuania, less in Belarus, were also to be taken into consideration"<sup>868</sup>. The author also describes the two different solutions, federal and incorporative, considered by Polish politicians to establish the new state's borders, and what is particularly relevant here, to establish the eastern border<sup>869</sup>. This third chapter of the dissertation, precisely, attempts at analysing Spanish views on this "eastern" complexity and the federal vs. incorporative views.

### Spain and the Polish-Ukrainian conflict over Eastern Galicia 1918-1919

The Polish-Ukrainian conflict had, logically, a lesser impact in the Spanish press and in Spanish diplomacy's correspondence than the Polish-Soviet War, but it also had a smaller impact than the Upper Silesia conflicts, the Polish-Lithuanian conflict, and even the Polish-Czech conflict over the Cieszyn Silesia region, as well as the conflict over the Danzig Free City and the control of its port. The dispute over Eastern Galicia had a similar level of impact in Spain's press as the Greater Poland uprising. The newspaper in which the conflict had the largest impact and was commented more often and with further details was 'El Sol', and the second one was 'ABC', the first pro-allied and closer to liberalism, the second one Germanophile and clearly conservative.

The Polish-Ukrainian fights for the control of Lwów (Lemberg) in November 1918 were mentioned but not described in the Spanish press texts that referred to the conflict. An event occurring as a consequence of this battle, the so-called Lwów Pogrom on November 21-23,

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<sup>868</sup> J. Ciechanowski, *The years 1918–1921: the recovery of Polish independence in the international context*, "Acta De Historia & Politica: Saeculum XXI", num. 4 2022, Mykolaiv 2022, p. 7-18; p. 11.

<sup>869</sup> *Ibidem*.

1918, is covered in the fourth chapter of this research work, dedicated to the Polish-Jewish question. In fact, overall, the military events of the Polish-Ukrainian war were covered by the examined Spanish press sources, but without many details. The military development of the conflict was covered by own comments mainly on 'ABC' and 'El Sol'. The first of them appeared on December 4, 1918, when 'ABC's' editors reported that "Galicia has become a battlefield, where Poles and Ukrainians fight with a great fierceness". The newspaper added that "the combats that took place in Lemberg caused 200 dead and a few hundred wounded"<sup>870</sup>. On the Spanish sources we cannot read about the surprise that firstly Ukrainians generated in Poles when taking control of the city in early November, and also to the surprise the Polish reaction generated in Galician Ukrainians. In fact, Ukrainians of the Ukrainian Military Organization, according to Łukomski *et al* in October 1918 did not think Poles would fight them when they will try to dominate Eastern Galicia<sup>871</sup>.

In late May and early June 1919 the Spanish press highlighted Polish military victories against Ukrainians, but on February 20, 1919 'ABC's' editors had already reported that Polish troops had had military successful operations in Ukraine and Galicia<sup>872</sup>. On May 29, 1919 'ABC' reported that the Polish troops achieved military victories in Galicia, had taken Lemberg and Stryj, "an important communications node"<sup>873</sup>. On June 1, 1919 'ABC's' editors reported that "the Polish troops keep reaching important advantages in the fronts of Galicia and Lithuania. The cities of Stanisławów, Brody and Radziwiłłów are in their power, the Ukrainians are withdrawing everywhere"<sup>874</sup>. On the other hand, on June 2, 1919 'El Sol' included a press note of the Spanish press agency Fabra originally based on a telegraphic note from Warsaw, which the newspaper titled "Galicia is already Polish". In the note one can read:

"While the Polish troops, in their victorious advance in Eastern Galicia occupied the significant towns of Sokal, Brody, Kalusz and Stanislau, in the city of Tarnopol and other places an insurrection started against the domain of Ukrainian

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<sup>870</sup> "Hacia la paz", 'ABC', 04.12.1918, p. 20.

<sup>871</sup> G. Łukomski; C. Partacz; B. Polak; *Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919. Działania bojowe-aspekty polityczno-kalendarium*, Koszalin 1994, p. 62.

<sup>872</sup> "La conferencia de la paz", 'ABC', 20.02.1919, p. 9.

<sup>873</sup> "La conferencia de la paz", 'ABC', 29.05.1919, p.17.

<sup>874</sup> "La conferencia de la paz", 'ABC', 1.06.1919, p. 15.

Bolsheviks, and this way, almost the whole Galicia is in the hands of Poles, which are hosted with enthusiasm by the Polish, Ruthenian and Jewish people”<sup>875</sup>.

### **The Polish-Ukrainian conflict in the eyes of Spanish diplomacy**

Unlike the Polish-Ukrainian dispute over the Chełm region resulting from the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk between the Central Powers and Ukraine in 1918, analysed in the first chapter of this research work, the armed conflict that started in late 1918, which is on what this subchapter is focusing, had a very small impact in Spanish diplomacy. Only one reference to the Eastern Galicia conflict has been found among the examined diplomatic correspondence, what contrasts with many references to this conflict on the examined press sources. As a matter of fact, one can state that the impact of the after-Great War Polish-Ukrainian conflict was much higher in the Spanish press than in Spanish diplomacy.

In regard to Spanish diplomatic reactions to the conflict, it must be first explained that on December 18, 1918 Spain’s ambassador in Berlin Luis Polo de Bernabé wrote a report for the Minister of State (Alvaro de Figueroa) Count of Romanones, in which he described the Ukrainian-Polish conflict over Eastern Galicia. He explained that “the Western Republic of Ukraine” was in a war with Poland. The ambassador stated Lemberg and Przemyśl were cities mostly inhabited by Poles, and these were the places where the fights were located. He argued that Poland used the argument of “historical rights” to claim the lands east of the San river, which were claimed by Ukrainians as well. The ambassador added that, at that point, both Lemberg and Przemyśl were in Polish hands. He also stated in the context of this conflict that the convulsion affecting the world in general was also affecting Poland <sup>876</sup>. We can interpret that by “convulsion”, Polo Bernabé referred to the instability after the fall of the three Central and Eastern European Empires, including the defeat of the Central Powers in the Great War as well as the Russian Bolshevik attempt for expansion towards the West.

As it was explained in the section dedicated to the Brest-Litovsk treaty, in the first chapter of this thesis, on March 11, 1918 Spain’s ambassador in Berlin Polo Bernabé described

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<sup>875</sup> “Polonia. Galicia es polaca ya”, ‘El Sol’, 2.06.1919, p. 6. Original quoted text: “Mientras que las tropas polacas, en su victorioso avance en la Galicia oriental, ocupaban las importantes poblaciones de Sokal, Brody, Kalusz y Stanislau, estalló en la ciudad de Tarnopol y otros sitios una insurrección contra el dominio de los bolcheviques ucranios; de manera que casi toda la Galitzia está en poder de los polacos, que son acogidos con entusiasmo por la población polaca, rutena y judía”.

<sup>876</sup> AHN, H1338, 18.12.1918, Spain’s ambassador in Berlin Polo Bernabé to Spain’s State Minister Count of Romanones (Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres)



the Polish-Ukrainian territorial conflict resulting from the treaty. In his view, the conflict originated because :“the definition of the borders of Ukraine to the west has generated a great discontent among Poles. These want that this line reaches the Bug river, as it was determined in the 1815 Congress of Vienna. The fact that a great number of Ukrainians live to the west of this line is not considered by them in the scales”<sup>877</sup>. It must be directly stated that the Spanish diplomat was wrong when he claimed that many Ukrainians lived west of the Bug river, since these were undoubtedly Polish lands ethnographically speaking with the exception of some of the lands on the west bank of the Bug’s upper course in Galicia.

### **Austria-Hungary’s and Germany’s role in the conflict**

The origins of the conflict were seen by the authors of some of the examined sources in the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian empire in the autumn of 1918 and in others as well on the policies that Austria-Hungary and Germany had conducted towards Ukrainians. On May 23, 1919 ‘El Sol’ explained that Austria-Hungary, until the outburst of the Great War, supported Ukrainian nationalism “in order to weaken Russia” by means of the Ukrainianist political movement, and qualified this nationalism of “literary” instead of real. The newspaper added that this Austrian policy also had the downside for Austria itself of a resurrected Ukraine “claiming the Eastern districts” of the Austrian province<sup>878</sup>. From this last comment we can interpret that ‘El Sol’ was not considering as a confirmed fact that Galicia no longer would be Austrian. It must be considered this text was published a few months before the Treaty of Saint German. Precisely, on June 12, 1919 ‘El Sol’'s Catalan contributor Eugenio Xammar argued that in the Conference of Saint Germain most nations that were part of Austria-Hungary were not represented, and this was a problem on the newspaper’s views, even if the newspaper admitted the issue was that many of these nations were now in alliance with the Western Allies, or with part of them. The journalist highlighted that these nations, however, were not in friendly relations among them and had many conflicts, and gave as an example, among others, the Polish-Czech conflict over Cieszyn Silesia and, what is here relevant, the Polish-Ukrainian conflict. On his text we read that “Eastern Galicia and Lemberg are reason for polemics-and of

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<sup>877</sup> AHN, H1338, 11.03.1918. Spain’s ambassador in Berlin Luis Polo de Bernabé to Spain’s State Minister Eduardo Dato. Original quoted text: “La demarcación de los límites de la Ucrania hacia occidente han despertado gran descontento entre los polacos. Pretenden que Polonia alcanza hasta la línea del río Bug, como fue determinado en el congreso de Viena en 1815. El que al occidente de esa línea habiten gran número de ucranianos no pesa para ellos en la balanza”.

<sup>878</sup> “Los problemas de la paz. Rutenos y Polacos. Polonia rechaza el armisticio”, ‘El Sol’, 23.05.1919, p. 6.

war polemics-between Poland and Ukraine”<sup>879</sup>. Thus, it can be interpreted that Xammar saw the Polish-Ukrainian war directly as part of the consequences of the Austro-Hungarian dissolution in a Central and Eastern European context. On May 23, 1919 ‘El Sol’'s editors believed that Poland, when fighting against Ukraine, was in reality fighting against [already no-longer existent] Austria-Hungary<sup>880</sup>. This statement could be generated by the fact that after the Great War, Poland had conflicts with countries that had also been part of the Habsburg Dual Monarchy, but such a claim can be assessed as misleading.

Germany’s role in the origins of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict was also commented by ‘El Sol’ on May 18, 1919. The liberal pro-Allies newspaper stated that Ukrainians were military commanded by “German, Austrian and Hungarian officers”. The editors added that “for six months now, Germany has been sending cannons, rifles, machine guns, ammunition and officers to the Ruthenian bands, in order for them to sustain their campaign”<sup>881</sup>, what can be clearly interpreted as the newspaper’s criticism of this fact. When looking for references in scientific literature to this German support of the Ukrainian armies, we see that Łukomski *et al* explain, for instance, that on December 16, 1918 Poles killed three officers of the Ukrainian army and one of them was actually a German officer, and even the “commander of that company”. The same authors add that on December 27, 1918 Polish soldiers found written orders in German when they took a Ukrainian command post<sup>882</sup>.

### **Spain and the three Ukraines**

One observation easy to make after a brief examination of the selected and examined primary sources, is that there is not much clarity in the consulted Spanish sources regarding which Ukrainian entity or institution the authors are writing about. In addition, none of the examined sources referred to the existence of three Ukrainian entities, the West Ukrainian People’s Republic, the Ukrainian People’s Republic originally in Dnieper Ukraine and the Soviet Ukraine based in Kharkiv. In fact, this division, the different interests and goals and a lack of common strategy between West Ukrainian People’s Republic and Ukrainian People’s Republic are all well reflected in Polish scientific literature, but not in the Spanish press

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<sup>879</sup> “La hora de Austria en Saint-Germain. Una liquidación difícil”, ‘El Sol’, 12.06.1919, p. 7.

<sup>880</sup> “Los problemas de la paz. Rutenos y Polacos. Polonia rechaza el armisticio”, ‘El Sol’, 23.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>881</sup> “Las fronteras de Austria-Hungría. La delegación austriaca en Saint-Germain”, ‘El Sol’, 18.05.1919, p. 6

<sup>882</sup> G. Łukomski; C. Partacz; B. Polak; *Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919. Działania bojowe-aspekty polityczne-kalendarium, op. cit.*, p.145, 148.

examined sources, where there are no references to West Ukraine, only to Ukraine, simply. For instance, on May 23, 1919 'El Sol' used the term "provisional Ukrainian government" in reference to the Ukrainian People's Republic. In addition, the newspaper did not make a distinction between the armies of the West Ukrainian People's Republic and the Ukrainian People's Republic as two different entities, but rather as part of the same national entity<sup>883</sup>. However, as mentioned above, Spain's ambassador in Berlin Polo Bernabé stated that this conflict was a war between Poland and "the Western Republic of Ukraine"<sup>884</sup>.

On to another matter, it must be stated that a few pieces of information published in the Spanish press about the Polish-Ukrainian conflict over Eastern Galicia either in own comments or in telegraphic press notes can seem very confusing, and likely led to misunderstanding among Spanish press readers. Among these are all the references to the "Ukrainian Bolsheviks" being the other side of this conflict, the Polish enemy, when in fact neither the West Ukrainian People's Republic nor the Ukrainian People's Republic were ruled by Bolsheviks, and both Ukrainian Republics regarded Bolshevik Russia as their enemy, with which they were in war, especially in the case of Ukrainian People's Republic in Dnieper Ukraine. However, Ukrainian Bolsheviks existed as such, and controlled lands east of Dnieper Ukraine, and even had their own government venue in Kharkiv<sup>885</sup>. In June 1919 'El Sol' even claimed that "nationalist bolshevist Petlura" had troops in Eastern Galicia, against which Polish armies were fighting<sup>886</sup>. When looking in relevant literature for the links with Bolshevism of Petlura and the Ukrainian People's Republic, one reads that, for instance, Norman Davies describes Petlura politically as: "a Ukrainian patriot, given in, above all, to the question of the independence of his country, he had socialist and radical views, he condemned the exploitation of Ukraine by Russian landowners and foreign capitalists, he was a politician as well as a warrior who defends his ideals with a sword in his hand"<sup>887</sup>. In no moment Davies uses the words communist, Bolshevik or pro-Soviet to refer to Petlura. However, Henryk Zieliński argues that "the influence of the

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<sup>883</sup> "Los problemas de la paz. Rutenos y Polacos. Polonia rechaza el armisticio", 'El Sol', 23.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>884</sup> AHN, H1338, 18.12.1918. Spain's ambassador in Berlin Luis Polo Bernabé to Spain's State Minister Count of Romanones Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres.

<sup>885</sup> G. Łukomski; C. Partacz; B. Polak; *Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919. Działania bojowe-aspekty polityczno-kalendarium, op. cit*, p. 163.

<sup>886</sup> "Los bolcheviques toman la ofensiva. Balance de la situación militar y política de Rusia", 'El Sol', 6.06.1919, p. 1.

<sup>887</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, Kraków 1997, p. 99-100. Original quoted words: „Petlura był ukraińskim patriotą, oddanym przede wszystkim sprawie niepodległości swojego kraju, żywił poglądy socjalistyczne i radykalne; potępiał wyzysk Ukrainy przez rosyjskich obszarników i cudzoziemskich kapitalistów; był tak samo politykiem, jak i wojownikiem, który broni swoich ideałów z szablą w dłoni”.

Soviet authorities in Dnieper Ukraine increased” in 1919<sup>888</sup>. One can interpret from this statement that these influences might have been much stronger among peasants and workers than among the small upper class and, most importantly, than among the Ukrainian political leaders. Regardless of this, one can claim that the usage by Spanish newspapers such as ‘El Sol’ or ‘ABC’ of the terms “Bolshevik Petlura” or “Bolshevik Ukrainians” in relation to the Ukrainian People’s Republic was inaccurate and unjustified.

Another concept seen in the examined Spanish press sources that must have led to confusion among Spanish readers at the time was the usage of the term ‘Ukrainian Galicia’<sup>889</sup> since it is unclear if it referred to lands in Eastern Galicia ethnographically dominated by Ukrainians or to territories in the region controlled by Ukrainian political institutions.

### **The Polish-Ukrainian border**

A very significant question in the analysis of this conflict is the Polish-Ukrainian border that had to be established as a result of the Polish-Ukrainian War and territorial dispute. Polo Bernabé had already referred during the Great War to the border between Poland and Ukraine established by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Concretely, on March 11, 1918, Spain’s ambassador in Berlin described the consequences which the Brest-Litovsk Treaty had had for the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Namely, he referred to the Polish-Ukrainian territorial conflict resulting from the treaty. As it has already been mentioned above, Polo Bernabé claimed that the Brest-Litovsk treaty had established a border with Ukraine that was unacceptable for Poles<sup>890</sup>. In relation to this idea regarding borders between the so-called Polish Kingdom and Ukraine, it is also worth highlighting that also during the Great War, but much earlier, on August 22, 1915, Spanish Germanophile newspaper ‘El Debate’ had claimed that Germans would control the Bug river and would “rectify the political borders of the former kingdom of Poland”, in a reference to the borders of Poland established by the Congress of Vienna in 1815<sup>891</sup>. In reality, when reporting and analysing the conflict, Spanish press contributors and Spanish press editors mostly mentioned the borders proposed by the Entente’s mediation attempts. On June 22, 1919

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<sup>888</sup> H. Zieliński, *Pozycja Polski na arenie międzynarodowej; Polityka zagraniczna rządu Paderewskiego* [in:], *Historia Polski, Tom iv 1918-1939, cz.1: rodz. I-XIV (1918-1921)*, red. T. Jędruszczak, Warszawa 1984, p. 276. Original quoted words: “na Ukrainie Naddnieprzańskiej rosły wpływy władzy radzieckiej mającej swa siedzibę początkowo w Charkowie”.

<sup>889</sup> “Todavía hay guerra. Los bolcheviques contra Rumanía. Balance de las últimas operaciones”, ‘El Sol’, 14.04.1919, p. 4.

<sup>890</sup> AHN, H1338, 11.03.1918. Spanish ambassador in Germany Luis Polo de Bernabé to Spain’s State Minister Eduardo Dato.

<sup>891</sup> “Impresiones del Día. De la política y la vida”, ‘El Debate’, 22.08.1915, p. 1.

'ABC's editors reported that "yesterday the Council of the allied leaders took care of the question of Eastern Galician borders to resolve the differences between Poles and Ukrainians"<sup>892</sup>. More importantly, the ceasefire lines, demarcation lines or proposed borders to resolve the Polish-Ukrainian conflict mentioned in the Spanish press sources are the following: on May 18, 1919 'El Sol' stated that, as a result of this armistice, a provisional border was created, leaving Przemyśl and Lemberg in Poland, and leaving "the Galician petroleum area" in Ukraine. As Łukomski *et al* explain, the line proposed by Louis Botha left Lwów in Polish hands but left Drohobycz and Borysław in Ukrainian hands, unlike the previous proposal by general Joseph Berthélemy, so the information provided by the Spanish newspaper was absolutely correct. Another border reference found in the Spanish sources is the one made on May 23, 1919 by 'El Sol's editors, who claimed that Poland demanded an Eastern border in Galicia that follows the former border of Romania [with Austria-Hungary] in Bukowina. According to the Spanish newspaper, Poles used the following argument to support their claim: "this way the German-Magyar block, so compact despite the military catastrophes of last November, will be perfectly isolated and closed on the North"<sup>893</sup>. Łukomski *et al* explain that in February 1919 Ukrainians rejected a border proposed by French general Berthélemy, president of a mission that arrived in Lwów in January 1919. The proposed line ran east of Lwów, Drohobycz and Borysław. In addition, Ukraine rejected another proposed border on March 27<sup>894</sup>. Information about who proposed this second border or demarcation line has not been found in the consulted scientific literature.

### **The role of Haller's army in the conflict**

Another significant question that must be analysed regarding the Polish-Ukrainian conflict over Eastern Galicia is the contribution to the war's final result of the arrival in Poland and military intervention in Eastern Galicia of general Haller's Army. This was commented both by Spanish press editors and contributors and, many years later, by Polish historians. On May 23, 1919 'El Sol' argued that the Polish-Ukrainian armistice proposed by the Entente occurred precisely when Haller's divisions could allow the Poles to "clean Eastern Galicia from

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<sup>892</sup> "La firma del tratado de paz", 'ABC', 22.06.1919, p.11. Original quoted text: "El Consejo de los gobernantes aliados se ocupó ayer de la cuestión de las fronteras de la Galitzia oriental para resolver las diferencias entre polacos y ucranianos".

<sup>893</sup> "Los problemas de la paz. Rutenos y polacos. Polonia rechaza el armisticio", 'El Sol', 23.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>894</sup> G. Łukomski; C. Partacz; B. Polak; *Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919. Działania bojowe-aspekty polityczne-kalendarium, op. cit.* p. 85.

enemies and take possession of the oil fields”<sup>895</sup>. In relation to this, Polish historian Zieliński explains that the arrival in Poland of Haller’s troops in April and May 1919 allowed the Polish military leaders to launch an attack against Ukraine in Volhynia and Podolia regions<sup>896</sup>. Next, it is worth highlighting that on July 7, 1919 Spanish conservative and Germanophile newspaper ‘ABC’ highlighted that the Ukrainian “attitude” led the Paris Peace Conference decision-makers to allow Poland “to use general Haller’s troops” in Eastern Galicia<sup>897</sup>. This fact reported by ‘ABC’ was correct, because, as Polish historian Michał Klimecki explains, on June 28 the Allies’ Higher Council gave permission to Poland to use all its armies in Eastern Galicia, including Haller’s army<sup>898</sup>. Klimecki also explains that before this attack executed against Ukrainians in Volhynia and Podolia, in April 1919 the Supreme Command of the Polish army had decided that the starting date of the “next offensive operation” in the disputed region would depend on the arrival in Poland of Haller’s Army. This author adds that the assigned function to Haller’s Army was to be “a striking offensive force with the goal of ”Ukrainian Galician Army’s destruction”, what would give Poland the ultimate victory in the war against Ukraine<sup>899</sup>. However, the same author also clarifies that in the end in the Polish-Ukrainian conflict “the actions by the armies of general Józef Haller against the army of the People’s Ukrainian Republic had only a supporting profile and did not lead to the destruction of the armed forces of that country”. In regard to these attacks by Haller’s army, the scholar also states that “their political goal was to establish a border that was favourable to Poland and to force Symon Petlura to give up from a union with the West Ukrainian People’s Republic”<sup>900</sup>. Łukomski *et al* explain that on May 27, 1919 Haller was “ordered to move his staff to Częstochowa”, by the Polish High Command, on the one hand, because of the Entente powers pressuring Poland to end its military offensive in Eastern Galicia, and, on the other hand, because of “growing German danger on the West”. However, as also Łukomski *et al* explain, as a consequence of Haller’s influence on the conflict, the Ukrainian People’s Republic sent its delegates to Lublin to meet general Haller. The Ukrainian negotiators asked its Polish counterparts for a ceasefire along the Bug-Stryj line, a proposal that Haller was willing to accept in return for several demands: the

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<sup>895</sup> “Los problemas de la paz. Rutenos y Polacos. Polonia rechaza el armisticio”. ‘El Sol’, 23.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>896</sup> H. Zieliński, *Pozycja Polski na arenie międzynarodowej; Polityka zagraniczna rządu Paderewskiego, op. cit.*, p. 276.

<sup>897</sup> “Los aliados y la cuestión de Hungría”, ‘ABC’, 7.07.1919, p. 13.

<sup>898</sup> M. Klimecki, *Polsko-ukraińska wojna o Lwów i Galicję Wschodnią 1918-1919*, Warszawa 1999, p. 235.

<sup>899</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 188.

<sup>900</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 215.

Ukrainian Galician Army's capitulation, their arms delivery to Poland, and an investigation on terror crimes committed by Ukraine against the Polish population<sup>901</sup>.

### **The Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Polish politics**

The political role of the Polish Sejm in regard to Poland's military movements in the Polish-Ukrainian conflict also found an echo in the Spanish press. Firstly, on the May 7, 1919 'El Sol's' edition, the liberal pro-allied Spanish newspaper explained to its readers that the Polish Parliament, the Sejm, approved a motion boosted by "the reactionary members of the Sejm" that encouraged Piłsudski to make war in Eastern Galicia against Ukrainians "which, as it is known, want at all trances to take possession of Lemberg and claim Ruthenia as their land"<sup>902</sup>. 11 days later, and referring to the exact same political event, a press note published on 'ABC' reported that the British newspaper 'Morning Post' claimed that the Polish Diet asked for a military attack on Eastern Galicia, despite Paderewski having promised in Paris there would not be more Polish military attacks in the region<sup>903</sup>. In relation to this contradiction between the Sejm's requests and Paderewski's promises to the Entente, Polish historian Zieliński explains that since its beginning, it seemed clear that Paderewski's government would try to create an army in the east in order to undertake "an armed expansion to the East or to ensure internal order" and the right-wing party ZLN (Związek Ludowo-Narodowy, National-Popular Union) in the Sejm claimed there was "a need to defend Eastern Galicia, Lwów and the raids by Hajdamaks"<sup>904</sup>. The ZLN members of Polish parliament (representatives of the Endecja national democratic movement) mentioned by Zieliński were precisely "the reactionary members of the Sejm" to which 'El Sol' newspaper referred.

### **The Western Allies' role in the conflict**

Many mentions are seen in the examined sources to the allied missions and commissions sent by the Entente to the disputed and conflicted territory. On January 28 'ABC' reported that

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<sup>901</sup> G. Łukomski; C. Partacz; B. Polak; *Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919. Działania bojowe-aspekty polityczne-kalendarium*, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

<sup>902</sup> "La toma de Vilna por los polacos. Polonia y Lituania. ¿Unión o federación?", 'El Sol', 7.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>903</sup> "La Conferencia de la paz. Dimisión de Paderewski", 'ABC', 18.05.1919, p. 15.

<sup>904</sup> H. Zieliński, *Pozycja Polski na arenie międzynarodowej; Polityka zagraniczna rządu Paderewskiego*, *op. cit.*, p. 198-199. Original quoted words: "[...] do ekspansji zbrojnej na wschód oraz zapewnienia „porządku wewnętrznego”; „konieczności obrony Galicja Wschodniej, Lwowa i napadach „hajdamackich”.

“an Anglo-French military mission has arrived in Galicia and will try to make that all hostilities get suspended”<sup>905</sup>. ‘ABC’ namely referred to Barthélemy’s mission and the later mission by British colonel Adrian Carton de Wiart, as Zieliński mentions<sup>906</sup>. Klimecki adds that Berthélemy proposed an armistice line in the Bug and the Dniester and initially wanted to leave the oil fields under the Entente’s control. This author also argues that the mission’s visit had an impact in later decisions of the Entente, such as the one to assign Lwów to Poland, and that Berthélemy was very keen on Polish interests<sup>907</sup>. Zieliński highlights that Barthélemy’s allied mission talked with the Polish and Ukrainian sides for few weeks, and also that the suggested demarcation line proposed by this mission, which was rejected by both Poles and Ukrainians, left two thirds of the disputed region in Ukrainian hands<sup>908</sup>.

A significant event directly affecting the Entente’s interallied mission to Eastern Galicia was reported on February 26, 1919 by ‘ABC’. The Spanish conservative newspaper included its own information reporting that “Ukrainians do not waste time in contemplation and have cannoned a train that conducted the Interallied Commission through Galicia”<sup>909</sup>. It must be explained that in the war event calendar included in *Wojna Polsko-ukraińska* by Łukomski *et al*, this incident is not mentioned. However, Klimecki does refer to this incident and explains that in the town of Gródek Jagielloński, Ukrainian “projectiles fell in the train of the sub-commission, wounding a few people”, but he describes it as an early March 1919 event, what does not fit with the fact ‘ABC’ reported this incident on February 26. The source used by Klimecki might have included a wrong date for such incident. Klimecki explains that this attack on the sub-commission train happened in the context of Western Ukrainians rejecting the border proposal by Berthélemy, accusing the sub-commission of “partiality” and breaking the provisional ceasefire of the negotiations between the Polish and Ukrainian delegations and the allied Commission<sup>910</sup>.

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<sup>905</sup> “La conferencia de la paz”, ‘ABC’, 28.01.1919, p. 9.

<sup>906</sup> H. Zieliński, *Pozycja Polski na arenie międzynarodowej; Polityka zagraniczna rządu Paderewskiego*, *op. cit.*, p. 278-279.

<sup>907</sup> M. Klimecki, *Polsko-ukraińska wojna o Lwów i Galicję Wschodnią 1918-1919*, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

<sup>908</sup> H. Zieliński, *Pozycja Polski na arenie międzynarodowej; Polityka zagraniczna rządu Paderewskiego*, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

<sup>909</sup> “La conferencia de la paz”, ‘ABC’, 26.02.1919, p.17. Original quoted text: “Los ucranianos no se paran en contemplaciones y han cañoneado un tren que conducía a través de Galitzia a la comisión interaliada”.

<sup>910</sup> M. Klimecki, *Polsko-ukraińska wojna o Lwów i Galicję Wschodnią 1918-1919*, *op. cit.*, p. 176.



## The Armistice

Many references are found in the examined Spanish sources to an armistice or ceasefire project initiated by the Western Allies, in order to end the conflict. On May 18, 1919 'El Sol' highlighted that an allied mission presided by general Botha imposed an armistice in Eastern Galicia. The newspaper's editors reported that, as a result of this armistice, a provisional border was created that left Przemyśl and Lemberg in Poland, and "the Galician petroleum area" in Ukraine. As Polish historians Łukomski *et al* explain, the line proposed by Botha left Lwów in Polish hands but left Drohobycz and Boryslaw in Ukrainian hands, unlike the previous Berthélemy's proposal, so the information given by the Spanish newspaper was absolutely correct<sup>911</sup>. However, this proposal had not been accepted and was finally accepted only by the Ukrainian side. Łukomski *et al* also explain that on May 24 in Warsaw an agreement was reached between Paderewski's government and the People's Ukrainian Republic, finalizing the war between both sides. By means of the agreement, the Ukrainian part officially resigned from the territories of Eastern Galicia and Volhynia, defined as territories to the West of the Stryk river, in return for Poland helping the Ukrainian state to get officially recognized internationally. Ukrainian armed forces were to be placed under Polish command<sup>912</sup>. The West Ukrainian People's Republic was not part of this agreement, and around May 24 it sent its delegates to Lublin to meet general Haller. The Ukrainian negotiators asked for a ceasefire along the Bug-Stryk line, a proposal that Haller was willing to accept in return for many demands, among them: the Ukrainian Galician Army's capitulation, arms delivery to Poland and an investigation on terror crimes committed against Polish population by Ukraine. As a consequence of these negotiations, on June 1, 1919 West Ukrainians decided to end the Western war front with Poland and to focus on their war with the Bolsheviks, and, on the same day, Serhij Delwieg left for Lwów to talk with the Polish side on West Ukrainian's behalf<sup>913</sup>. On May 29, 1919 'El Sol' highlighted the fact that Poland's leaders were outraged about the proposed armistice with Ukraine. The newspaper clarified that this Polish-Ukrainian armistice was proposed precisely at the moment when Haller's troops had arrived in Poland<sup>914</sup>. On the

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<sup>911</sup> G. Łukomski; C. Partacz, Czesław; Polak, Bogusław; *Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919. Działania bojowe- aspekty polityczne-kalendarium, op. cit.* p. 85.

<sup>912</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 86.

<sup>913</sup> *Ibidem*. See: M. Wołos, *Dwie misje rotmistrza Bolesława Długoszowskiego „Wieniawy” do Paryża w 1919 roku. Część 2: Emisariusz Belwederu przy szefie Francuskiej Misji Wojskowej w Polsce*, „Dzieje Najnowsze” 2023, nr 1, p. 7-9.

<sup>914</sup> “Los problemas de la paz. Rutenos y Polacos. Polonia rechaza el armisticio”, 'El Sol', 23.05.1919, p. 6.

same day 'ABC's editors claimed that an armistice was being negotiated between Poles and Bolshevik Ukrainians, "which will have to evacuate the whole former Austrian province, that earlier was part of the Kingdom of Poland". The newspaper added that "this region will now receive a very wide autonomy". Thus, 'ABC' interpreted that Poland would eventually take the whole Eastern Galicia and Ukrainians soldiers would be forced to abandon Eastern Galicia. On May 21 the Entente's Supreme Council demanded that Poland stop "the Eastern Małopolska offensive" and again on May 27 asked Poland "to stop its actions in the south-eastern front". Łukomski *et al.* report that on May 27 the Entente's Supreme Council issued a note addressed to Poland asking to "stop Polish actions in the south-eastern front"<sup>915</sup>. On the very same day, Haller was "ordered to move his staff to Częstochowa", by the top Polish military authorities, on the one hand, because of the Entente pressuring Poland to end its military offensive in Eastern Galicia and, on the other hand, because of "growing German danger on the West"<sup>916</sup>. Zieliński explains that, among the Big Four, the most influential view on the Polish-Ukrainian question was Lloyd George's and the British prime minister's view was supported by American politician and director of the American Relief Administration Herbert Hoover. This is why the Western Powers decided to "threat Poland with holding the military aid and even the food deliveries if Poland did not abandon the fight with Ukrainians and did not comply with the orders from the Great Powers"<sup>917</sup>. As Zieliński adds, as a result of this threat, Piłsudski and the government decided to "hold the offensive in part of the Ukrainian front" and they removed "some divisions of Haller's army" from the disputed region with the Ukrainians<sup>918</sup>.

As Łukomski *et al* explain, after the June 7, 1919 meeting in Lwów between Serhij Delwieg from the West Ukrainian People's Republic and Polish representatives, a ceasefire to start on June 21 was agreed and a demarcation line was established along the June 1, 1919 front line position, but eventually the armistice was not respected by the Ukrainian side, which launched an attack that allowed it to take Złota Lipa and Brzeżany, what generated a Polish military reaction a week later that pushed the Ukrainian army to the other side of the Zbrucz river<sup>919</sup>. In fact, on July 7, 1919, ABC's editors reported that the armistice between Poland and Ukraine was "broken" and added that the Ukrainian "attitude" led the Paris Peace Conference

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<sup>915</sup> G. Łukomski; C. Partacz; B. Polak; *Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919. Działania bojowe-aspekty polityczne-kalendarium, op. cit.*, p. 220.

<sup>916</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 221.

<sup>917</sup> H. Zieliński, *Pozycja Polski na arenie międzynarodowej; Polityka zagraniczna rządu Paderewskiego, op. cit.*, p. 279.

<sup>918</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>919</sup> G. Łukomski; C. Partacz, B. Polak; *Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919. Działania bojowe-aspekty polityczne-kalendarium, op. cit.*, p. 86-87.

decision-makers to allow Poland “to occupy the whole Galicia and to use general Haller’s troops”<sup>920</sup>. It can be added that maybe ‘ABC’’s editors were also aware that during Polish-West Ukraine negotiations, initially the Ukrainians “demanded the withdrawal of Polish troops to the border suggested by Berthélemy. As Łukomski *et al* explain, on June 25 the Entente’s Supreme Council allowed Poland to continue its military operations in Eastern Galicia “until the river Zbrucz”, because of the Bolshevik threat, but the armed conflict between Poles and West Ukrainians stopped on July 27<sup>921</sup>. In addition, Zieliński explains that the June 25, 1919 Great Powers’ decision to allow Poland to provisionally occupy Eastern Galicia implied demands on Poland, such as to give autonomy to the region, as well as “political and religious freedoms to its inhabitants”. Moreover, the Entente established that a plebiscite would take place, ultimately giving the Powers the base to resolve the situation of the disputed region<sup>922</sup>.

### **The conflict resolution**

Poland’s and Ukraine’s common enemy, Bolshevik Russians, and the threat the latter generated in the view of the Entente, as well as the related to this threat military situation favourable to the Bolsheviks, were the main factors that led to the resolution and end of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in the summer of 1919, as it is explained in the consulted Polish scientific literature. Zieliński accounts that the fact that in early June 1919 in Volhynia the Polish troops were directly fighting against the Bolshevik troops without any Ukrainian troops between them, and the fact that the Soviet troops also approached the Polish ones in the south, made the Entente change its policy towards Poland in regard the Polish-Ukrainian conflict because the Western leaders and diplomats realized that Poland could play an important role against the Bolsheviks, while believed that Ukraine could play none. However, this author also explains that Entente still had in mind the Eastern Galician territories as part of a recovered White Russia, and this is why at that point it did not want to deliver the disputed region to Poland. In relation to the exact resolution and conclusion of the war, Zieliński explains that on September 1, 1919, after Petlura had contacted Piłsudski, a ceasefire agreement was reached by both parts, but this author highlights that it was the Polish Head of State who established the

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<sup>920</sup> “Los aliados y la cuestión de Hungría”, ‘ABC’, 7.07.1919, p. 13.

<sup>921</sup> G. Łukomski; C. Partacz, B. Polak; *Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919. Działania bojowe-aspekty polityczno-kalendarium*, *op. cit.*, p. 86-87.

<sup>922</sup> H. Zieliński, *Pozycja Polski na arenie międzynarodowej; Polityka zagraniczna rządu Paderewskiego*, *op. cit.*, p. 279. Original quoted words: “[...]oraz swobód politycznych i religijnych jego mieszkańcom”.

conditions, being the most important one that the demarcation line would be placed along the Zbrucz river. However, Kaczmarek highlights, that after Poland and the Ukrainian People's Republic had reached a peace agreement on September 1, setting the Zbrucz river as a "provisional demarcation line", the West Ukrainian People's Republic did not want to yield in Poland's favour, and the Entente had already accepted that Poland would administer temporarily the territories west of the Zbrucz river.

In regard to Spanish reactions to the Entente's decision on Eastern Galicia, on January 23, 1920 Sofía Casanova explained that "the decision of the Supreme Council in Paris regarding Eastern Galicia has moved the aching soul of this nation". Casanova added this was due to England's attitude towards Poland, and specifically to Lloyd George's stand, and she explained that the British premier argued that this was due to protests by those "who suffer the Polish exaltation". Casanova argued that Lloyd George knew the concept of nationalist exaltation very well and he should not "attribute only to Poles" such an exaltation. In relation to this nationalist exaltation, which the British prime minister accused the Poles of practicing, Casanova added: "In Ireland, in Egypt, in India and in all the nations of Europe, in the candidates to have at their disposal their own nation, there exists the fever of national exaltation, which is disenchantment, distrust, anger, and shame for the suffered deception"<sup>923</sup>. So, it can be interpreted that Casanova claimed that wrong policies in the British Empire towards dominated nations within the Empire had generated more nationalist exaltation than the one the British premier accused Poland of experiencing.

References among the examined Spanish press sources to the length of the period assigned to Poland by the Entente to keep control of Eastern Galicia, are only found on a Granzow's article on 'La Correspondencia de España'. Namely, the Spanish-Polish columnist and diplomat wrote that "in May last year it was decided that Galicia would be delivered to Poland for 10 years only". However, Granzów also clarified that Paderewski, thanks to his diplomatic efforts, obtained, "the lengthening of the provisional period to 25 years"<sup>924</sup>.

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<sup>923</sup> "Por la Europa de la paz V", 'ABC', 23.01.1920, p. 3. Original quoted text: "En Irlanda, en Egipto, en la India y en todos los pueblos de Europa, aspirantes a disponer de sí mismos, existe la fiebre de la exaltación nacional, que es desencanto, desconfianza, ira y vergüenza del engaño sufrido".

<sup>924</sup> "Desde Polonia. Hablando con Paderewski (de nuestro redactor especial)", 'La Correspondencia de España', 31.01.1920, p. 1.

## **Piłsudski's role in the conflict**

It is also certainly worth analysing Piłsudski's stand towards the Polish-Ukrainian War in the views of Spain's press. On May 7, 1919 'El Sol' claimed that after sending a column to Lemberg, Piłsudski started an offensive but the Polish leader "took his best troops to Lithuania". One could infer from 'El Sol's comment, that for Piłsudski, taking Eastern Galicia was not as important as taking control of Lithuania. When looking for mentions to this strategic aspect of Piłsudski's military and political plans in scientific literature, we see that Polish author Michał Klimecki explains that in the context of March 1919: "the organization of offensive actions in the northern-eastern area weakened the significance of the Galician front in the general effort of the Polish armies, although in this front the majority of the forces which the Supreme Command had at its disposal were still there"<sup>925</sup>. Klimecki also explains that not until the Galician front was stabilized and the "security of the Galician capital" was ensured, in March 1919, could Józef Piłsudski prepare more intensively the northern eastern front military operations to take control of the Vilna region<sup>926</sup>. In the Polish political context of April 1919, Klimecki states that Piłsudski wanted to solve the Vilna question while he was waiting for the Haller troops to arrive in Poland from France<sup>927</sup>.

## **Paderewski's role in the conflict**

It is also worth looking at Paderewski's role within the diplomatic and political front in the evolution and resolution of the conflict. On January 31, 1920, 'La Correspondencia de España,' included an article written by Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda, based on his meeting with Paderewski. What is relevant here, a great deal of the conversation between Granzów and Paderewski was dedicated to the Galician question: Granzów de la Cerda explained that Paderewski "told Lloyd George that he would never sign a Treaty that would prevent his homeland from having a territory that belongs to it from a fair, legal and moral point of view"<sup>928</sup>.

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<sup>925</sup> M. Klimecki, *Polsko-ukraińska wojna o Lwów i Galicję wschodnią 1918-1919*, *op. cit.*, p. 190. Original quoted text: „Organizacja działań ofensywnych na północno-wschodnim obszarze osłabiła znaczenie frontu galicyjskiego w ogólnym wysiłku wojsk polskich, choć w dalszym ciągu na froncie tym znajdowała się większość sił, jakimi dysponowało Naczelne Dowództwo Wojska Polskiego”.

<sup>926</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 184.

<sup>927</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 188.

<sup>928</sup> “Desde Polonia. Hablando con Paderewski (de nuestro redactor especial)”, 'La Correspondencia de España', 31.01.1920, p.1. Original quoted words: “pero declare claramente a Lloyd George que jamás firmaría un Tratado que privase a su Patria de un territorio que le pertenece justa, legal y moralmente”.

Granzów also referred to Paderewski's stay in Paris as the foreign minister of the new Polish state to "fervently" advocate the East Galician Polish cause and, as Granzów argued, the Polish politician fought until the end of his political activity, obtaining in Paris, as a result of his efforts, as already mentioned, "the lengthening of the provisional period to 25 years". In addition, Paderewski in person told Granzów, as the latter reported, that if Eastern Galicia was not assigned to Poland this would be a "mutilation" of Poland's territory.

### **Ukrainian vs. Ruthenian**

On to another aspect of the analysis in Spain of the conflict here examined, the usage of both terms 'Ukrainian' and 'Ruthenian' by Spanish journalists and editors, in relation to Galicia and Ukraine, is worth commenting. It must be, for instance, highlighted that whereas Germanophile conservative newspaper 'ABC' used the term "Ruthenian Galicia", liberal pro-Allies newspaper 'El Sol' used "Ukrainian Galicia". Probably, in both cases the Spanish news editors had in mind Eastern Galicia between the San and Zbrucz rivers. Clearly, in both cases the term was used to make a difference between Eastern Galicia and Western Galicia, the historical Lesser Poland region, mostly inhabited by Poles. In fact, on 'El Sol' on May 23, 1919 it was claimed that Eastern Galicia was Ruthenian, while Central and Western Galicia were Polish and stated that "the Ruthenians are Ukrainians". It is also important to highlight that on February 13, 1919, Sofía Casanova used both the words Ruthenians and Ukrainians, separately, in the same sentence, when she claimed that "the Ruthenians and the Ukrainians are barbarians"<sup>929</sup>. However, it can be stated, even in the historical context of the analysed period, the term 'Ruthenian' had rather ethnographic nuances, whereas the term 'Ukrainian' was closer to national, political or even state-level identification. Therefore, one could argue that on 'El Sol' there was a vision of Eastern Galicia as a land where Ukrainians intended to implement a state-like entity, and this is why the newspaper's editors used the sentence "Ruthenians are Ukrainians" in the sense that Ruthenians, politically speaking, were Ukrainians, whereas 'ABC's term 'Ruthenian Galicia', following the same interpretation, one could argue, only referred to the fact that these lands were inhabited by many ethnic Ruthenians, some of which identified themselves as Ukrainians.

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<sup>929</sup> "ABC en Polonia", 'ABC', 13.02.1919, p. 6.

## Social and economic aspects

None of the Spanish press contributors and correspondents that wrote about the Polish-Ukrainian conflict over Eastern Galicia described social and economic aspects in the disputed region, except for the included references to the existence of oil fields in the disputed region. For instance, in regard to land property and sectors of employment, it must be remarked that Polish historian Henryk Zieliński highlights that 67% of large properties in the region were in the hands of Polish landowners, whereas Polish peasants also had some properties, whose amount cannot be measured. However, the author does not mention the percentage of properties in Ukrainian hands. Zieliński adds a 44% of Poles in Eastern Galicia worked in agriculture, a 39% in the industrial and commerce sectors and a 17% in liberal professions, whereas, in the case of Ukrainians, a 92% of them worked in agriculture, 7% in industry and commerce and only a 1% in liberal professions. The author also underlines that Ukrainians paid a 18% of the total taxes despite representing a 58% of the population in the region, according to the 1910 statistics<sup>930</sup>.

## Demographic and ethnographic aspects

Precisely, it is observed that in regard to demographic or ethnographic aspects, few comments are found in the Spanish examined sources. In December 1918 aforementioned Spain's ambassador in Berlin Polo de Bernabé stated that Lemberg and Przemyśl were cities mostly inhabited by Poles whereas on 'El Sol' on May 23 1919 it was claimed that Eastern Galicia was Ruthenian, while Central and Western Galicia were Polish, although also clarifying that "there are many more Ruthenians than Poles in Eastern Galicia. This is doubtless". The editors of the liberally-oriented Spanish newspaper also highlighted that the San river "near Przemyśl" indicated the beginning of Ukraine from an ethnographic point of view<sup>931</sup>. Zieliński states that the 1910 Austro-Hungarian statistics indicated a 58 % of Ukrainians/ Ruthenians, a 28.3% of Poles and a 12.4% of Jews in the disputed region<sup>932</sup>, meaning twice as much Ukrainians as Poles, what would confirm that 'El Sol' s May 23 statement was true.

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<sup>930</sup> H. Zieliński, *Pozycja Polski na arenie międzynarodowej; Polityka zagraniczna rządu Paderewskiego, op. cit.*, p. 266.

<sup>931</sup> "Los problemas de la paz. Rutenos y Polacos. Polonia rechaza el armisticio", 'El Sol', 23.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>932</sup> H. Zieliński, *Pozycja Polski na arenie międzynarodowej; Polityka zagraniczna rządu Paderewskiego, op. cit.*, p. 266.

Nevertheless, it is worth highlighting that on 'El Sol's June 12 edition, Catalan columnist Eugenio Xammar argued that using ethnic criteria to create the new borders resulting of the disintegration of Austria-Hungary was not a good solution and, in the same context, he mentioned, among other conflicts, the Polish-Ukrainian one<sup>933</sup>. Therefore, we can interpret that Xammar was clearly against the division of Eastern Galicia between Poland and Ukraine according to ethnographic data.

### **Geopolitical aspects of the Eastern Galicia conflict**

It can be interpreted, from the examined sources and scientific literature, that Eastern Galicia also had a great geopolitical significance, what might have been an added motivation for both sides to control the region, even though the geopolitical factors were less important than the ethnic, historical and cultural ones from the Polish and Ukrainian points of view. However, attention to geopolitical aspects was higher among the Western Powers after winning the Great War, also in the context of their mediation in territorial disputes after the disintegration of the European Empires. The geopolitical significance of this region was caused, on the one hand, by the presence of oil fields in it, and, on the other hand, and not less importantly, because of the region's strategic location, just above the Carpathian mountains, separating it from Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and bordering with Romania, meaning that the region was on the way to the Black Sea and was the last territory before Dnieper Ukraine and Russia. In regard to Spanish views on this geopolitical significance, on April 14, 1919, 'El Sol's editors claimed that "Ukrainian Galicia" was the final barrier between Hungary and Soviet Russia. In relation to this, Polish historian Zieliński explains that after the March 1919 Hungarian revolution, the Entente believed that the risk of an expansion of Bolshevism to Hungary through Galicia and Ukraine was really high, and, therefore, it was important to keep a corridor before the Russian Bolsheviks intact, what the Polish-Ukrainian conflict was putting in danger. This scholar adds that the Entente had already been concerned about this possibility since the beginning of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict<sup>934</sup>. Interestingly enough, the Spanish newspaper did not refer to the geopolitical role of the Carpathian region in relation to the new states of Poland or Czechoslovakia, being this more important in the Polish case.

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<sup>933</sup> "La hora de Austria en Saint-Germain. Una liquidación difícil", 'El Sol', 12.06.1919, p. 7.

<sup>934</sup> H. Zieliński, *Pozycja Polski na arenie międzynarodowej; Polityka zagraniczna rządu Paderewskiego, op. cit.*, p. 278.



In relation to the geography of the disputed region, from the perspective of the Spanish press, it is worth explaining, firstly, that on April 3, 1919 'ABC' reported that the Interallied mission that "visited Poland" was later in Cracow "to study what happens in Galicia"<sup>935</sup>. Therefore, 'ABC' made a difference between Poland and Cracow, because its editors still had in mind Cracow as part of Austrian Galicia and Poland as the same as Congress (Russian) Poland. A similar situation is seen on 'El Liberal's May 23, 1919 edition, the only occasion, leaving telegraphic press notes aside, when the newspaper referred to the Polish-Ukrainian conflict. The newspaper included a map of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire presenting the new political division of these territories based on the upcoming Peace Treaty, and in the map Galicia was included, undivided and completely separated from Poland, indicating the city of Cracow. A text was inserted below the map. On it we read "to the North, Galicia will be distributed between Poland and Ukraine"<sup>936</sup>. We can interpret that, logically, the newspaper's editors did not know what would happen with the disputed region, meaning they had no certainty regarding where the border would be in Galicia, as far as a possible division among Poles and Ukrainians of the disputed region was concerned. However, on the published map, the Spanish newspaper drew the whole northern border of Galicia separating the region from former Congress (Russian) Poland.

### **Atrocities committed during the conflict**

Last but not least, one must also remark that among the examined Spanish sources, only Sofía Casanova referred to atrocities committed during the Polish-Ukrainian conflict, and, more specifically, she only referred to atrocities caused by Ukrainians or Ruthenians. On a text published on 'ABC' on February 13, 1919, but written in January 1919, the Spanish writer claimed that :

"sick and wounded continuously arrive to the hospitals and reported horrors perpetrated by Ruthenians in Galicia. Paramedics from my Red Cross section have collected alive soldiers inside and outside Lemberg with burned eyes and fatal mutilations. Others are left to die at the sites of the fire with broken hands. The infinite range of cruelties and criminality of war unfolds its scale, below ground and on each flaming step corpses are piled up, dismembered. The Ruthenians and Ukrainians are

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<sup>935</sup> "La conferencia de la paz", 'ABC', 3.04.1919, p. 13.

<sup>936</sup> "Los preliminares de la paz", 'El Liberal', 23.05.1919, p. 3.

barbarians, and they fight primitively, they and the gangs of criminals, scattered throughout eastern Galicia [...]”<sup>937</sup>.

On a text published on the next day, on February 14, 1919, but as well written in January, Sofía Casanova also appealed to Spanish women and women in the whole world, by asking them for “charity and love” in order to end “the martyrdom of men, children, women and peaceful priests in Ukraine, Lithuania, Galicia and Poland”<sup>938</sup>. If in Polish scientific literature we look for input on atrocities taking place during the conflict here analysed, it is worth firstly mentioning that Łukomski *et al* claim that during the first two weeks of the war, no atrocities were committed. He adds that on November 14, 1918 a Ukrainian division killed Polish prisoners of war and the following days Poles did something of a similar scale. He adds that atrocities committed by Ukrainians also affected Polish civilians, especially in Lwów. Łukomski *et al* mention a case, in which the Ukrainian soldiers gorged out the eyes, similarly to what Casanova reported about Polish soldiers with burned eyes, and killed a 15-year-old Polish volunteer, on November 21, 1918. Łukomski *et al* add that Ukrainian army men did not respect the Geneva convention regarding treatment and medical care of injured soldiers, and even nurses were shot. The same authors explain that Polish healthy prisoners were kept together with Polish prisoners who had typhus in Ukrainian-organized prisons and camps. As a matter of fact, Casanova had also referred to Polish soldiers coming back sick from the front in this war<sup>939</sup>. Therefore, it seems clear that in her description of atrocities suffered by Poles in hands of Ukrainians, Casanova did not exaggerate. However, the same authors also mention atrocities committed by the Polish side. They also mention the orders by general Tadeusz Jordan Rozwadowski to shoot at Ukrainian peasants who were armed in the Ukrainian villages that the Polish army was taking over. Łukomski *et al* also explain that on the front a Polish delegation made up of three women, Maria Dulębianka, Teodozja Dzieduszycka and Maria Opińska analysed the situation of Polish prisoners, interned and arrested in January 1919 for a month and then reported it to the allied mission of general Barthélemy. As the same authors explain,

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<sup>937</sup> “ABC en Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 13.02.1919, p. 6. Original quoted text: “Llegan a los hospitales heridos y enfermos continuamente y refieren horrores cometidos por los rutenos en Galitzia. Sanitarios de mi sección de la Cruz Roja han recogido dentro y fuera de Lemberg soldados vivos con los ojos quemados y con mutilaciones mortales. Otros son puestos a morir en los sitios del fuego con las manos rotas. La gama infinita de las crueldades y de la criminalidad de la guerra despliega su escala, tierra abajo, y en cada llameante peldaño se hacinan cadáveres descuartizados. Son bárbaros los rutenos y ucranios, y pelean primitivamente, ellos y las bandas de malhechores, esparcidas por Galitzia oriental”.

<sup>938</sup> “ABC en Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 14.02.1919, p. 4.

<sup>939</sup> “ABC en Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 13.02.1919, p. 6.

despite an agreement between both sides on February 1, 1919 demanding compliance with the Geneva and Hague conventions on the treatment of prisoners of war, Ukrainian atrocities against Poles increased as the Ukrainian side started to suffer more military defeats. These scholars add that all the atrocities committed by Ukrainians in Eastern Galicia against Polish soldiers and civilians were much less significant than the atrocities perpetrated by Bolsheviks, Anton Denikin's White Russian soldiers and Petlura Ukrainian People's republic soldiers in Dnieper Ukraine against civilians: Jews, Poles and others<sup>940</sup>.

## Conclusions

To conclude this section about Spanish perspectives on the Polish-Ukrainian conflict, it must firstly be argued that this was not a first level question for Spain's diplomacy, secondly that the Spanish newspapers and their contributors, when commenting on the Polish-Ukrainian conflict, placed their focus particularly, leaving military events aside, on the Entente mediation, the proposed borders, and the ethnographic reality of the region. Thirdly, it can be stated that in the pro-allied newspapers, there was criticism of both Imperial German and Austro-Hungarian, as well Republican German, policies in the disputed region before, during and right after the Great War, respectively. In addition, the main causes for the outburst of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict were attributed to mistaken German and Austrian policies, although 'ABC' was also critical of the Entente's management of the conflict. 'ABC' was also critical of Ukraine's attitude in front of the Entente and expected Poland to take over control over the disputed region.

As in the case of other territorial disputes, Spanish comments placed a lot of emphasis on the Entente's role to solve the dispute and especially on the allied commissions and missions sent to the region. Casanova criticised Lloyd's George criticism of Polish attitudes in the region and highlighted the significance of controlling this territory for Poland. Moreover, it can be inferred that Granzów regarded as the solution that Paderewski obtained from the Entente, a 25-year control over the disputed territory, as not enough.

Sofía Casanova conveyed a very negative image of Ukrainians, by referring to the atrocities committed by these and depicted them as less civilized than Poles, as it is also seen in other 'ABC' articles (not mentioned in this subchapter) of the Spanish writer.

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<sup>940</sup> G. Łukomski; C. Partacz; B. Polak, *Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919. Działania bojowe-aspekty polityczne-kalendarium*, op. cit., p. 97.

Last but not least, it can be concluded that in Spain, particularly among press contributors and editors, the Ukrainian people were quite unknown at the time.

### Spain and the Polish-Soviet War 1919-1921

The Polish-Soviet War was the most important conflict which the reborn Polish state had to face and the only war that really endangered the whole project of an independent Poland. What is relevant to state, first of all, is that the confrontation between the new Polish state and Bolshevik Russia had an enormous impact in the Spanish press and also in the diplomatic correspondence of Spain's State Ministry. This one was no doubt the conflict to determine the borders of the new state with the largest impact in the examined Spanish press sources, with only the Vilna question and the Upper Silesian dispute getting a similar level of attention. The armed conflict and the diplomatic movements around it were reported with an extremely high frequency by Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's state minister.

Most articles in the Spanish press concerning the Polish-Soviet war appeared in 1920 and the Spanish press author that most often referred to the conflict was 'ABC's Sofía Casanova.

When reading the Spanish press editorial articles and contributions on this war one can feel the sense of urgency and gravity of a potential enormous threat, caused by the Bolsheviks, not only for Poland but also for Europe, and for Spain, that the Spanish journalists, correspondents and columnists conveyed in their texts about the conflict. In relation to this threat, most press comments and editorial texts in Spain wished for a clear Polish victory over the Bolsheviks.

Most comments in the Spanish press looked at the conflict from a global European perspective, highlighted its global dimension and saw it as part of the clash between the West and Bolshevism, and not only as a regional Eastern European conflict between Poland and Soviet Russia. In addition, most of these press comments, apart from reporting on the military situation, revolved around the likelihood or unlikelihood of a an armistice and a peace agreement, and around the diplomatic games between Soviet Russia, Poland and the Entente regarding a potential armistice and potential peace negotiations. In fact, from October 1920 onwards, Spanish press comments on the Polish-Soviet War revolved around the actual armistice and peace negotiations once these occurred.

Before detailing this project's source analysis on this matter, it is important to highlight that historians Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski and Cristina Gonzalez Caizán, based on their own research for their article about Spanish perspectives on the Polish-Soviet War<sup>941</sup>, have identified four different stands regarding this conflict in Spain's "public opinion". Firstly, there were those Spaniards who supported both the Entente and Poland, the latter because of its historical fight for freedom, secondly, those who supported the Entente but were "critical of the new states [like Poland] and from them expected the conduction of a yielding policy towards Powers", thirdly, those in the far left who wanted the Bolsheviks to win the war so that the revolution would extend throughout the old continent and, finally, those Germanophiles that, despite being against the Bolsheviks, wanted these to defeat Poland because this would change "The Versailles order" that they opposed<sup>942</sup>. Here it must be admitted, that by means of the found and selected primary sources, I have only to a very small extent been able to show these four different Spanish views on the Polish-Soviet War listed by Ciechanowski and González Caizán.

### **Spanish Views on the War's Military Developments**

The diplomatic reports sent by Gutiérrez de Agüera from Warsaw (and Poznań during the Battle of Warsaw, when the diplomatic corps was evacuated to Greater Poland's capital) focused both on military and diplomatic aspects but dedicated a lot of attention to the changes in the front, as well as to both sides' armies situation and military strategies. With an extremely high frequency, Agüera reported to State Ministry on the war situation, and in the Spanish press many comments written by newspapers' editors or by particular contributors appeared about the military situation of the war. These made predictions about the conflict's nearest and longest future. In addition, it must be highlighted that Spanish analysis of the military situation were, logically, also connected with comments on the situation in the diplomatic front.

### **Early phase of the conflict**

On November 9, 1919 Sofía Casanova claimed that the Polish army would be of great value in the military efforts against the Bolsheviks and that it featured 1000 soldiers "who fight in Volhynia and Polesia, on the Berezina and on the Duna [rivers]"<sup>943</sup>. By the "Duna" Casanova

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<sup>941</sup> J. Ciechanowski; C. González Caizán, *Wojna polsko-rosyjska z perspektywy hiszpańskiej*, *op.cit.*

<sup>942</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 453. Original quoted words: "krytycznych w stosunku do nowych państw i oczekujących od nich prowadzenia polityki uległej wobec mocarstw".

<sup>943</sup> "Aniversario bolchevique. De Rusia III", 'ABC', 9.11.1919, p. 3.

most likely referred to the Western Dvina river (also called Daugava in English). In the context of late 1919 and early 1920, Andrzej Nowak states that “it was hard to keep a long, over 1000 km front for the next months”<sup>944</sup>.

This is very telling of how unready Poland was for a full-scale war with the Bolsheviks in late 1919, when this conflict was still a small war in the Western fringes of the former Tsarist Empire and the Eastern fringes of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. As per these mentioned sources, a military escalation of the conflict with Soviet Russia also seemed unlikely in early 1920. However, Norman Davies explains that:

“in a certain moment, in February or in March the Polish leader broke down in himself and decided on a pre-emptive attack, which he had been thinking about for a long time. But he was still hesitating and wondering. While preparing for war, he also dragged out peace talks”<sup>945</sup>.

Davies adds that there was also a similar hesitation on the Soviet side, and both sides wanted to proactively stop war actions “in a gesture of good willingness”<sup>946</sup>. Then, everything changed in spring 1920: on April 29, 1920 Agüera reported that the Soviets sent the Polish government (for a second time) a radio telegram in which they express their willingness to start peace negotiations, despite Poland’s previous refusal of an armistice. Agüera interpreted that the Soviets changed their perspective on the conflict after Polish victories in Ukraine over the three previous months and would probably accept Poland’s proposal to start peace negotiations<sup>947</sup>. This, surely, happened before the big offensive in Ukraine entered its decisive phase, so Agüera interpreted that, at that point, Poland already had certain leverage over Soviet Russia in a potential peace negotiation.

## The Polish Offensive in Ukraine

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<sup>944</sup> A. Nowak, *Kłęska Imperium Zła, Rok 1920*, Kraków 2020, p. 61.

<sup>945</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały. Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 97. Original quoted text: W którymś momencie - w lutym lub w marcu - przełamał się w sobie i zdecydował na atak wyprzedzający, o którym od dawna myślał. Lecz wciąż wahał się i zastanawiał. Przygotowując się do wojny, zarazem przeciągał rozmowy pokojowe”.

<sup>946</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted words: “w geście dobrej woli”.

<sup>947</sup> AHN, H1681, 29.05.1920, Spain’s plenipotenciary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Salvador Bermúdez de Castro, Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

The Polish offensive to get the Soviet Russian troops out of Dnieper Ukraine started on April 25, 1920<sup>948</sup>. Around two weeks later, on May 11, 1920, 'ABC' explained to its readers that Poland was in the middle of an offensive and was approaching Kiev, also thanks to Petlura's men, while "The Red troops do not oppose resistance", because Leon Trotsky either really believed the Entente would arrange a peace between Soviet Russia and Poland, or he prioritized the Caucasian front<sup>949</sup>. 'ABC' also mentioned that the Polish cavalry was 50 miles from Kiev, according to the British newspapers "which are very well informed" while five days earlier it was announced by Polish leaders that Kiev had been occupied<sup>950</sup>.

Polish historian Andrzej Chwalba explains that after Patek's note to the Bolsheviks on April 6-7, 1920 these already knew Poland would attack them. The author adds that "the Soviet authorities still were not in a situation to determine, if the main attack would be conducted in the north or on the south of Polesia, because in the first and in the second place the Soviet intelligence informed about the concentration of Polish armies"<sup>951</sup>.

It is worth noting that in an article regarding the Polish offensive in Ukraine written in June 1920, but published on July 17, Sofía Casanova argued that a joined military effort of several countries against the Bolsheviks would be more effective than "this heroic campaign by the Poles"<sup>952</sup>. The Spanish writer, however, summarized the achievements of the Polish Ukrainian campaign in the following way:

"Piłsudski, with his brave legions, challenges the Muscovites, tramples them in Kiev and in the Berezina, conquers Ukraine for his allied the Ataman Petlura and makes the favour to the English of getting rid for them of the Bolshevik hordes in the Caucas, which are called to fight against Poland"<sup>953</sup>.

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<sup>948</sup> J. Szczepański, *Władze i społeczeństwo Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej wobec bolszewickiego zagrożenia w 1920 roku*, Warszawa 2022, p. 56.

<sup>949</sup> "Boletín del día. La Guerra polaco-rusa". 'ABC', 11.05.1920, p. 12.

<sup>950</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>951</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane Zwycięstwo, Wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, Wołowiec 2020, p. 170. Original quoted text: „Lecz władze sowieckie nadal nie były w stanie ustalić, czy główny atak dokona się na północ czy na południe od Polesia, gdyż w jednym i w drugim miejscu wywiad sowiecki informował o koncentracji wojsk polskich”.

<sup>952</sup> "Los nuevos hombres. El ataman ucraniano Petlura I", 'ABC', 17.07.1920, p. 3.

<sup>953</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "Piłsudski, con sus legiones bravas, desafía a los moscovitas, los arrolla en Kiev y el Beresina, conquista Ucrania para su aliado Ataman Petlura y hace el favor a los ingleses de quitarles de encima, en el Cáucaso, las hordas bolcheviques que son llamadas a combatir contra Polonia”.

However, Casanova believed that the Polish offensive in Ukraine would not have a real impact in a European context. What is more, she argued that the war between Poland and Soviet Russia would not end with Soviet Russia. The Spanish writer stated that “Poland alone cannot face Russia”. Moreover, Casanova argued that this war would not make Soviet Russia disappear. In any case, she argued that most countries did not have the eagerness to engage in a war against the Bolsheviks<sup>954</sup>. However, on a text published on August 14, 1920, *a posteriori*, Casanova changed her tone towards this question and regarded “the conquest of Ukraine”, in reference to the Polish offensive in Ukraine, as Piłsudski’s mistake<sup>955</sup>. On the other side, there is not a clear comment by Agüera calling the Polish offensive in Ukraine a mistake. However, on June 12, 1920 Spain’s top diplomatic representative in Warsaw regarded the Polish evacuation from Kiev as “shameful”<sup>956</sup>. So, the resulting evacuation from the previously conquered region is what the diplomat criticized, and not the previous Polish offensive. Remaining on this question it is also worth mentioning that Norman Davies argues that there were positive and negative reactions to the Polish offensive in Ukraine among the Western Powers, and the British-Polish historian explains that: “every strike against the hated Bolsheviks generated satisfaction. But the next *fait accompli* by Piłsudski done against the suggestions by the allied leaders, was a stone image”<sup>957</sup>. About the consequences of the Polish offensive in Ukraine, Norman Davies argues that “it was easier to conquer Ukraine than to manage it. Although Poles came there as liberators, they soon became “occupiers”. They didn’t generate either enthusiasm or animosity”<sup>958</sup>.

In addition, the British-Polish author states that “the Polish offensive in Ukraine is generally regarded as a political and military fiasco. When it comes to the political aspect, there is no doubt about it [being a fiasco]”<sup>959</sup>. Therefore, Davies’s statement supports the rightness of Casanova’s critical assessment of the Ukraine Polish offensive. Moreover, still in regard to this question, Polish historian Jędruszczak explains that in a post-offensive crisis context, the *Endecja* (national democrats) “accused Piłsudski and his supporters that the Kiev expedition

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<sup>954</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>955</sup> “ABC en Polonia. Fe en la defensa I”, ‘ABC’, 14.08.1920, p. 3.

<sup>956</sup> AHN, H1681, 12.06.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lwlor).

<sup>957</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 111. Original quoted text: „każdy kolejny cios zadany zniechęconemu bolszewikowi budził zadowolenie. Ale następny *fait accompli* Piłsudskiego dokonany wbrew sugestiom przywódców alianckich był kamieniem obraży”.

<sup>958</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 109. Original quoted text: “łatwiej było zdobyć Ukrainę, niż nią zarządzać. Choć Polacy przyszli tu w charakterze wyzwolicieli, wkrótce stali się „okupantami”. Nie budzili ani entuzjazmu, ani wrogości”.

<sup>959</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 126. Original quoted text: „Wyprawę kijowską uważa się powszechnie za polityczne i militarne fiasko. Jeśli idzie o aspekt polityczny, nie ma co do tego wątpliwości”.



was an ill-considered undertaking, beyond the forces of the young state, badly organized in military terms, that the officer corps of the Polish army was insufficiently prepared [...]”<sup>960</sup>. Therefore, it is seen that Sofía Casanova’s criticism of the Polish offensive in Ukraine is backed by these two historians *a posteriori*.

In relation to Casanova’s frequent criticism of Polish military and political decisions, it is worth mentioning that historians Cristina González Caizán and Jan Stanislaw Ciechanowski, both experts in the figure of Sofía Casanova, argue that the Spanish writer was a bit “apocalyptic”, and that she was really concerned about the Bolshevik treat to Western civilization. These authors also claim that Casanova was not able to keep the required distance from the events, what was expected from someone who intended to report on these with “intellectual moderation”<sup>961</sup>.

### **The Turn of the Tide in the Soviets’ Favour**

Professor Chwalba explains, in relation to the Bolsheviks counteroffensive against Poland in late spring 1920, that “Soviet Russia could not help taking advantage of the invitation, which the Polish side conveyed, taking Kiev and Ukraine”<sup>962</sup>. Precisely, about the Soviet counteroffensive, on May 29, in his report for State Minister, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw argued that:

“The Bolshevik offensive places Poland in a defensive situation, and taking into account the Entente’s promises, the latter is obliged to offer all the needed help [to Poland] to avoid the country’s invasion by the red armies since Poland is regarded as the protecting wall of Europe against the barbarism of the east”<sup>963</sup>.

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<sup>960</sup> T. Jedruszczak, *Bitwa warszawska. Rozejm, Historia Polski, Tom IV 1918-1939, Część 1, rodz. I-XIV (1918-1921)*, red. T. Jedruszczak, Warszawa 1984, p. 379. Original quoted text: „Wytykali oni Piłsudskiemu i jego zwolennikom, że wyprawa kijowska była przedsięwzięciem nie przemyślanym, ponad siły młodego państwa, źle zorganizowanym pod względem wojskowym, że korpus oficerski armii polskiej jest niedostatecznie przygotowany[...]”.

<sup>961</sup> C. González Caizán, J. Stanislaw Ciechanowski, *Wojna polsko-rosyjska z lat 1919-1920 w korespondencjach Sofii Casanovy dla madryckiego dziennika „ABC”, op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>962</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przegrane Zwycięstwo. Wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, op. cit., p. 206. Original quoted text: “Rosja sowiecka nie mogła nie wykorzystać zaproszenia, jakie strona polska wystosowała, zajmując Kijów i Ukrainę”.

<sup>963</sup> AHN, H1681, 29.05.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor). Original quoted text: “[...]la ofensiva bolchevista, coloca a Polonia en situación defensiva, y que atendiéndose a las promesas de la Entente esta queda obligada a prestarla toda la ayuda necesaria para impedir la invasión del país por los ejércitos rojos ya que Polonia es considerada como la muralla protectora de Europa contra la barbarie del Este”.

In addition, a few days later, on June 12, 1920, in a letter to Spain's state minister, Agüera reported that Piłsudski's characteristic good luck seemed to have finished due to failures in the Berezina and Ukraine, and the Spanish diplomat also reported that the Polish high command decided to evacuate its troops from Kiev. Agüera considered that "the moral effect of the loss of Ukraine must, no doubt, be enormous" for Poland<sup>964</sup>.

As a matter of fact, Chwalba explains that the military situation changed drastically in June 1920 in favour of the Russian Soviet Army, which obtained the "strategic initiative". In addition, this author argues that:

"the morale of the Polish army got worse, similarly like the Ukrainian army's. The optimism and the faith in success faded. The apathy and stagnation appeared. Once again it could be observed that it is easier to attack than to defend. During the defence more losses were incurred than during the attack. Especially a lot of losses were incurred by the officer corps[...]"<sup>965</sup>.

### **The Entente's military help**

In regard to the Entente's military support for Poland, it must be explained that on July 26, 1920 'ABC' doubted about whether the material and personnel-based help sent to Poland by the Western allies would arrive in Poland in time to avoid a Polish defeat against the Bolsheviks, or not. The newspaper partly justified its doubt on the fact that "Germany has declared that it will not let go more reinforcement for Poles through its territories, than just generals and diplomats". The newspaper's editors added that the delivery of artillery and men from the Western allies proper could only take place via Gdańsk or via Crimea, the latter thanks to Wrangel's help. The Spanish journalists regarded this as difficult, in the case of Crimea, because of timing, and, in the case of Gdańsk, because they believed that Poles might need to run away from territories whose control might give them access to the port city<sup>966</sup>.

It must be also underlined that whereas on August 3, 1920, on 'La Correspondencia de España' Granzów concluded that Poland was in a "critical" situation and had only two options,

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<sup>964</sup> AHN, H1681, 12.06.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>965</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 214. Original quoted text: "Pogorszyło się morale polskiego wojska, podobnie jak ukraińskiego. Zgasły optymizm i wiara w sukces. Pojawiły się apatia i marazm. Po raz kolejny można było obserwować, że łatwiej jest atakować, niż się bronić. W trakcie obrony ponoszono większe straty niż podczas ataku. Szczególnie duże poniósł korpus oficerski".

<sup>966</sup> "Boletín del día. Los aliados ayudan", 'ABC', 26.07.1920, p. 13.

either to negotiate peace with Soviet Russia or to receive “efficient help” from the Allies<sup>967</sup>, on a text published eight days later, on August 12, Casanova stated that the Entente’s help would arrive already too late to face the Bolsheviks’ big attack<sup>968</sup>. One can argue that Casanova’s prediction was wrong, and in the end, French help was on time to support Poland in the Battle of Warsaw.

### **Polish Soldiers and Volunteers**

Sofía Casanova claimed that Piłsudski and Polish soldiers had a mutually loving relationship and underlined the fact that the troops “take part in his enthusiasm, in his tenacity for the fight until winning and annihilating the muscovite troops”<sup>969</sup>. Casanova also highlighted that Piłsudski praised the, according to Casanova, “admirable” Polish soldiers, who, as Piłsudski said: “naked and on bare feet in the hard months, showed themselves courageous in the campaign against the Russians”<sup>970</sup>. She added that “Piłsudski’s little soldiers defeat the red hordes that called themselves unbeatable, as in front of Koltchak and Denikine. In the same territory where the latter lost everything, except honour, Poland’s troops fight and succeed for their motherland and for Europe’s security”<sup>971</sup>.

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<sup>967</sup> “Desde Polonia. Ante la amenaza bolchevista (de nuestro redactor especial)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 3.08.1920, p. 1.

<sup>968</sup> “Páginas de la guerra. El exterminio de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 12.08.1920, p. 3.

<sup>969</sup> “Los nuevos hombres. El jefe del estado polaco II”, ‘ABC’, 18.06.1920, p. 3.

<sup>970</sup> “Los nuevos hombres. El jefe del estado polaco IV”, ‘ABC’, 23.06.1920, p. 4. Original quoted words: “desnudos y descalzos en los crudos meses, mostrábanse animosos en la campaña contra los rusos”.

<sup>971</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Los soldaditos de Piłsudski derrotan a las hordas rojas que se decían invencibles, como ante Koltchak y Denikine. En el mismo territorio donde éste perdió todo, menos el honor, las tropas de Polonia batallan y triunfan por su Patria y la seguridad de Europa”.

In the same article, “Los nuevos hombres. El jefe del estado polaco IV”, ABC, 23.06.1920, p.3, Casanova reported that Piłsudski described Russia’s difficult current socioeconomic situation to her. Casanova reported Piłsudski exactly telling her:

“[...]What there happens is appalling. All the cities die one after another in the disaster of hunger and typhus. Broken the pipes by the pressure of the accumulated ice, there is no water and the filth covers the streets. In Moscow the streets and the ozobonat-wooden chales, have been dissembled to use as fuel their materials. In the territories that we have in Lithuania, for example, fields and hamlets are ravaged. Population has diminished a 50 or 60% in some places, in other there are either houses nor huts nor men nor animals, I have travelled around by car few times for 24 hours, the previously inhabited and supplied fields without finding any trace of human existence[...]”.

Quoted text in Spanish: “[...]lo que allá sucede es espantoso... las ciudades mueren una a una en el desastre del hambre y del tifus...Rotas las cañerías por la presión del hielo acumulado, se carece de agua y las inmundicias cubren las calles. En Moscou las calles y los ozobonak-villas de madera- han sido deshechas, para aprovechar como combustible los materiales de ellas. En los territorios que hemos recuperado en Lituania, por ejemplo, están asolados campos y poblados. Ha disminuido en un 50 y 60 por 100 la población en algunos lugares; en otros no hay ni casas, ni chozas, ni hombres, ni animales. He recorrido varias veces en auto, durante 24 horas, los campos antes habitados y pródidos sin encontrar ni huella siquiera de la existencia humana[...]”.

However, Casanova claimed that in Poland there was not a good knowledge of the enemy and its real military power, and also claimed that at those times weapon quality was more important than soldiers' bravery, and, as an example of that, she mentioned Russia's and Serbia's defeats in the Great War.

### **Poland's Crisis Period and the Battle of Warsaw**

The examined Spanish primary sources, during the weeks in which the very existence of the new Poland was endangered by the Soviet invasion of ethnically Polish lands, reflected very well what was at stake for the reborn Polish state. However, the term "invasion of Poland", which, as it has been earlier mentioned, was used even before this phase of the Polish-Soviet conflict, by aristocrat Władysław Lubomirski in his correspondence to Spain's King Alfonso XIII in January 1920<sup>972</sup>, was generally not used either by Spanish press contributors or by Spain's minister in Warsaw, Gutiérrez de Agüera, when referring to the Bolshevik's acquired control, during their summer 1920 advance to the West, of territories ethnically Polish of the new state. An exception to this trend is seen in one of Sofía Casanova's articles, on August 12, 1920<sup>973</sup>, when she explicitly used the word "invasion", and also, implicitly, a lot earlier, on her March 31, 1920 article, in which, within the context of the armistice proposal sent by Soviet Russia to Poland, she referred to the "threat" of Bolsheviks invading the new Polish state in the near future<sup>974</sup>. It is worth noting that Casanova wrote this even before the Polish offensive in Ukraine and the consequent Soviet counteroffensive. So, already in the winter of 1920 Casanova believed that the Bolsheviks could invade Poland in the near future. Therefore, it can be claimed that, in this case, the Spanish writer had a very accurate intuition or prediction ability.

On July 26, 1920, 'ABC' argued that the Polish army was "demoralized" and also that the Bolshevik army got energy because of its victories, concluding that the military situation was different than at the beginning of the war, when there was an armed Polish resistance<sup>975</sup>. In relation to this, it is worth remarking that whereas on August 3, 1920, in one of his pres contributions, Granzów concluded that Poland was in a "critical" situation and had only two options, either to negotiate peace with the enemy or to receive support from the Allies to repel

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<sup>972</sup> AHN, H2650, 3.02.1920, Spain's state minister Marquis of Lema to King Alfonso XIII's private secretary Emilio María de Torres.

<sup>973</sup> "Páginas de la guerra. El exterminio de Polonia", 'ABC', 12.08.1920, p. 3.

<sup>974</sup> "El fracaso de Europa, IV", 'ABC', 31.03.1920, p. 3.

<sup>975</sup> "Boletín del día. Los aliados ayudan", 'ABC', 26.07.1920, p. 13.

“the advance of Trotski’s hordes in Polish lands”<sup>976</sup>, on June 18, 1920 Agüera had reported to Spain’s state minister that “a high personality in Polish politics”, whose name the Spanish diplomat did not reveal, explained to him that even if there were negotiations with the Soviets, the Polish army would need to protect all the Eastern front borders, because the peace negotiations would be very long, and even if these were concluded with an agreement, this could give very little safety to Poland, when it comes to the country’s eastern borders<sup>977</sup>.

In addition, it must be highlighted that whereas on her article published on July 28 (and written in July), Casanova claimed that the “deputies [in the Sejm] in my family” told her that the Bolshevik march into Poland “has been contained in the north part of the front”<sup>978</sup>, on August 3, 1920, on ‘La Correspondencia de España’, Casimiro Granzów explained that the National Defense Council took “energetic measures to avoid a possible disaster”, recruited new troops of other younger years and proclaimed a “massive uprising” to fight for Poland’s defence, by appealing to volunteers, whose number, as Granzów wrote, reached 300.000 after three days. However, Granzów added that this amount of men was not matched with enough fighting supplies (machine guns, cannons, tanks, cars, etc.), what made that these troops were not enough to defend Warsaw<sup>979</sup>.

It is also worth mentioning that on a text published on August 12, 1920, but written in July, Sofía Casanova claimed that Poland would not be exterminated thanks to “divine mercy”. Casanova also quoted the Polish newspaper ‘Gazeta Poranna’ reporting that “the whole Polish front, from the Auty to the Dniester, is burning in an immense battle, thousand kilometres are on fire”. The Spanish writer added that:

“Trotsky throws over us more and more divisions of men, who are not worn out by the fight. And in the [Russian] press there is incitement to fanaticism of holy war to exterminate Poland and well fed reserves are mobilized in Asian and European Russia [...]this millions of the Bolshevik army, cruel, thirsty of extermination, are getting closer to Poland’s border, and they come decided for the barbarian invasion, to break once and

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<sup>976</sup> “Desde Polonia, ante la amenaza bolchevista (de nuestro redactor especial) I”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 3.08.1920, p. 1.

<sup>977</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.06.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>978</sup> “Perfiles del caos III”, 28.07.1920, ‘ABC’, p. 3.

<sup>979</sup> “Desde Polonia, ante la amenaza bolchevista (de nuestro redactor especial) I”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 3.08.1920, p. 1.

for all the resistance of our weapons and our chests, to fulfil the order by Trotsky; that is to end the Polish army and Poland forever”<sup>980</sup>.

Casanova explained that Poles were aware of the costs of defending Poland against the Bolshevik attack. She also referred to the note sent by the Polish government to the Entente, when she wrote that “Poland fights to affirm its independence and for the civilization, and if it doesn’t get helped, Bolshevism will flood the West”. ‘ABC’'s correspondent also claimed that Bolshevik troops were already “at the gates of Minsk and Vilna, historical Polish regions, which they will have taken before my letter reaches Madrid”<sup>981</sup>.

Moreover, Casanova highlighted that there was an increase of patriotic feelings in Poland due to the war with Soviet Russia, and she claimed that the fact Haller had recruited 340.000 volunteers was a proof of this. She also referred to aspects in which the nearby war affected everyday life in Warsaw and surrounding areas: she highlighted that the Polish government requested its citizens to give away any weapons or ammunition they might have, because these were very needed. Casanova added that in her manor at Drozdowo, “we are getting ready to receive the fugitives of the invaded lands and the wounded and sick from the front”. Moreover, she compared the current situation with the situation at the beginning of the Great War in 1914. The Spanish writer also explained that the recruitment for the army stopped agriculture in the country and the war made that Poles stopped believing in a better future. In relation to a potential invasion of the whole Poland, she concluded that: “the hordes of Kalmuks, Teutons[?], Chinese and Kirguises would not leave a tree alive here, neither human eyes to see them”<sup>982</sup>.

In addition, it is worth underlining that in a text written on August 10, but published on August 24, Sofía Casanova explained that “the Battle of Warsaw has started, meaning the one that has to decide the destiny of this capital and of Poland” and added that the Russian troops approached Warsaw, what generated fear and surprise. Casanova reported that the

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<sup>980</sup> “Páginas de la guerra. El exterminio de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 12.08.1920, p. 3. Original quoted text: “Trotsky echa sobre nosotros divisiones y más divisiones de hombres, que o están gastados por la lucha y en la prensa se incita al fanatismo de la guerra santa, para exterminar a Polonia, y se movilizan nutridas reservas en Rusia asiática y europea[...] Estos millones del ejército bolchevique, crueles, sedientes de exterminio, acércanse ya a la frontera de Polonia, y vienen decididos a la invasión bárbara, a romper de una vez la resistencia de nuestras armas y de nuestros pechos, a cumplir la orden de Trotsky; esto es, acabar para siempre con el ejército polaco y con Polonia”.

<sup>981</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted texts: “Polonia lucha por afirmar su independencia y por la civilización”; “y están a las puertas de Minsk y de Vilno históricas regiones polacas, de las que se habrán apoderado antes que llegue mi carta a Madrid”.

<sup>982</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “las hordas de kalmukos, teutones, chinos y kirguizes no dejarían aquí un árbol vivo, ni ojos humanos que los vieran”.

Polish government would very soon abandon Warsaw along with the diplomatic corpus, and Casanova wondered if general Maxime Weygand would stay or leave the Polish capital, adding, about the French commander, that “he is complaining that Poles did not let him have the military forces at his disposal and organize the army with time”. In addition, Casanova argued that the Bolshevik plan for defeated Poland was to create Soviets, to generate internal unrest, to avoid a peace agreement with Poland, and to frustrate England’s plans. ‘ABC’s correspondent in Warsaw also argued, that according to news she heard, this could lead to a “second European war” if the allies intervened directly in the conflict by means of weapons shipment through Danzig, and by sending their troops through Baviera. In addition, Casanova explained that “higher class” Varsovians escaped from Warsaw while the city prepared its military defence against the Bolshevik attack, and in relation to this, she also mentioned that Weygand managed the fortification building efforts around the city. The Spanish writer highlighted that “the defence council of the capital organizes the volunteer committees, the sanitary points (in one of my district I will serve myself) and the aid points for the fighters in each site”. Casanova claimed that the military defence of the capital, was “in good French hands” and it would depend on the performance of troops located “in the most important sectors”<sup>983</sup>.

Importantly, Casanova also referred to a manifesto published in ‘Robotnik’, organ of the Polish Socialist Party, and addressed to socialists worldwide, in which the Polish newspaper asked workers around the world not to be “indifferent” towards the Bolshevik attack on Poland and to care about the Polish working class.

### **Poland’s military strategy**

Casanova noticed “a lack of reality sense in the men responsible of extending this war instead of consolidating the rising [Polish] state”<sup>984</sup>. Casanova explained to her readers that behind this Polish policy conducted by both politicians and army men, there was the intention to keep the Bolsheviks away from lands that were regarded by these as Polish, including Lithuania and Volhynia, even “going beyond the [Polish] ethnographic borders”, in order to consolidate Polish “national power” bases on historically significant places for

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<sup>983</sup> “ABC en Polonia. Ante el avance de los bolcheviques II”, ‘ABC’, 24.08.1920, p. 3-4.

<sup>984</sup> “ABC en Polonia. Fe en la defensa I”, ‘ABC’, 14.08.1920, p. 3.

Poland<sup>985</sup>. This comment can be interpreted as Casanova's criticism of the Polish military strategy associated to a federalist view of reborn Poland.

Casanova, however, admitted that probably those conceiving this policy that involved fighting probably did the right thing, "since by means of blood nationalities affirm themselves and the territorial possession of states is ensured" but, at the same time, given the Polish military failure in front of the Bolsheviks until that moment, Casanova believed that there were "flaws in origin" in Poland's defence strategy. In relation to this, Casanova highlighted that "Poland lacks munition factories, and the weapons and clothing of its soldiers is provided by its allies". The Spanish correspondent added that the amount and quality of the material provided to Poland was not always the best, highlighting also the fact that munition deliveries were blocked by Poland's enemies, meaning neighbouring countries. The Spanish writer concluded this was a sign that Poland's war against Soviet Russia could not be successful, at least not the offensive one, being the defensive one, in the contrary, likely to succeed<sup>986</sup>.

It is also worth highlighting that on October 13, 1920 on 'El Sol', in a text written on October 7 in Vienna, Polish intellectual Tadeusz Peiper, previously residing in Madrid, *a posteriori* gave another perspective on Soviet motivations to invade Polish ethnographic lands, and explained that:

"Today it is known that the reckless advance of the reds against Warsaw, advance done against all the laws of the military art, has been motivated, among other things, by hunger. The Soviet armies could not expect to get anything from their sourcing services and had to advance to get fed"<sup>987</sup>.

### **Spaniards in Poland during the Polish-Soviet War**

On August 10, 1920 Agüera reported to Spain's state minister that the Polish government organized a train for diplomatic personnel and foreigners who, given the danger of a possible Bolshevik invasion of Warsaw, did not want to stay longer in the Polish capital. The

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<sup>985</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>986</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>987</sup> "El régimen bolchevique en Rusia. La crisis suprema (de nuestro enviado especial en Viena)", 'El Sol', 13.10.1920, p. 1. Original quoted text: "Hoy se sabe que el imprudente avance de los rojos contra Varsovia, avance efectuado contra todas las leyes del arte militar, ha sido motivado, entre otras cosas, también por el hambre, Los ejércitos soviéticos no podían esperar nada de sus servicios de abastecimiento y tenían que avanzar para poder alimentarse".



Spanish diplomat referred to the Spanish colony in Warsaw made up of Sofía Casanova, Ponz Martinez, Mrs. Ximenez with two children and Mr Ramirez with a daughter. Agüera reported that Mrs. Ximenez and her sons left for Poznań in a trip organized by Granzów de la Cerda, “chancellor and translator of this legation”, that Ramirez and his daughter left for Paris “in a train of French refugees”, and that Sofía Casanova decided to stay<sup>988</sup>.

In the train that left for Poznań, filled with the Spanish legation archives, there were Spanish journalist Julio Álvarez del Vayo (correspondent in Berlin and in the Polish-Soviet war for the Argentinian newspaper ‘La Nación’), Granzów de la Cerda, and the wife of someone related to the Spanish legation. In his report to Spain’s State Minister, Agüera praised Granzów de la Cerda for his contribution to organize the evacuation. Agüera, meanwhile, like all the ambassadors and plenipotentiary ministers, stayed in Warsaw but reported that he knew that soon he would also have to be evacuated, along the rest of the diplomatic corpus. To his correspondence, the Spanish diplomat attached letters sent to him by Sofía Casanova and Amadeo Ponz in which the two Spaniards expatriates explained why they wanted to stay in Warsaw. On the same day, August 10, 1920 Casanova wrote an article for ‘ABC’, which got published on August 24, in which she explained that Gutiérrez de Agüera and Granzow de la Cerda offered to take her out of the Polish capital, but she refused because she wanted to get news from her daughter Bela in Łomża, which was under Bolshevik control, and also because, as a member of the Spanish Red Cross, she felt a moral obligation to stay in Warsaw<sup>989</sup>.

### **Origins of the conflict: the void left by the withdrawal of German troops in the Eastern Front**

The Polish-Soviet War started with the contact between Polish and Soviet Russia troops, both taking the void created by the withdrawal of German troops from the Ober-Ost, which ended the function of separators between Polish and Soviet Russian troops that the German army had had since the end of the war<sup>990</sup>.

In relation to this question, before this clash between the Polish and Soviet militaries even happened, when the Great War was not yet over, on October 11, 1918, a letter was sent from Bern to Spanish King Alfonso XIII by Polish aristocrat, patron of the arts and composer

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<sup>988</sup> AHN, H1681, 10.08.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Llawlor).

<sup>989</sup> “ABC en Polonia. Ante el avance de los bolcheviques II”, ‘ABC’, 24.08.1920, p. 3.

<sup>990</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda; wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920, op. cit.*, p. 19-20.

Prince Władysław Lubomirski, who asked Spain to do what it could as a neutral country in front of the Western allies, so that German troops would stay in the East<sup>991</sup>. This must be interpreted as a request by Lubomirski to the Kingdom of Spain in the context of Germany being about to lose the war, to pressure the Entente in order to avoid an enforcement over Germany of the withdraw of its troops from the Eastern front as soon as possible, a situation which would give the Bolsheviks the chance to occupy these lands on the Western fringe of the extinguished Russian Empire, still controlled by the German armies in October 1918. It must be highlighted that, in his letter, Lubomirski claimed that he feared that Poland might be accused of Imperialism if it occupied these lands to the east and he mentioned Poland wanted

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<sup>991</sup> AHN, H3024, 18.10.1918. Prince Władysław Lubomirski to Spain's King Alfonso XIII.

The original content of the letter in French was:

“Sire, sous la pression d'évènements qui se précipitent de plus en plus, j'ose soumettre ce qui suit à la généreuse et bienveillante attention de Votre Majesté.

La Pologne a subi au courant des dernières années toutes les horreurs et tous les ravage de la guerre. Mais hélas elle n'est pas au bout de son calvaire. Des nouvelles épreuves l'attendent, des nouveaux dangers la guettent. Le bolchevisme militant, qui conserve son foyer jusqu'à présent inextinguible en Russie, n'attend que le moment propice pour allumer un incendie destructeur en Russie Blanche et en Lituanie pour s'efforcer ensuite d'embraser la Pologne. Proclamant une idée, qui aux yeux des esprits primitifs et des mentalités ignares, paraît être sublime et ingénieuse, en même temps le bolchevisme dispose des ressources matérielles considérables et se trouve en outre pourvu d'armes et de munitions. le bolchevisme peut avoir beau jeu, car trouvera devant lui une Pologne désarmée-les facteur politiques polonais n'ayant pas trouvé désirable, pour des raisons appréciables de créer une armée polonaise dans les conditions existantes.

La Pologne désire ardemment le retrait des troupes d'occupation, mais d'autre part, elle ne peut fermer les yeux sur l'aspect réel de la situation qui en résultera et doit faire tout son possible pour parer aux dangers qu'elle implique. Pour ce qui est de leur propre territoire ethnographique les Polonais, pour le défendre contre le flot de l'anarchie venant d'en en hors, possèdent outre un patriotisme indiscutable, les cadres nécessaires pour une armée a créer : Généraux, officiers et sous-officiers. Ce ne sont que les armes et les munitions qui font entièrement défaut. S'ils arrivaient a les obtenir les Polonais pourraient et sauraient se défendre. Ils préféreraient ne pas apparaitre en qualité de défenseurs mais de gendarmes en même temps dans les territoires limitrophes, en Russie Blanche et en Lituanie ou ils ne forment qu'une minorité sérieuse. Il serait désirable qu'un force, neutre bienveillante et agissant au nom des hauts principes humanitaires se charge de cette double tache dans l'intérim entre le retrait des troupes d'occupation d'un côté et l'organisation d'un pouvoir légal dans ces régions et la suppression générale du bolchevisme en Grande Russie d'autre part. La susceptibilité des Polonais d'assumer ce rôle est compréhensible, car on pourrait de cotés malveillants, l'interpréter comme des symptômes d'un impérialisme Polonais, qui n'existe pas en réalité. Les Polonais sont des fédéralistes convaincus et c'est dans ce domaine qu'ils chercheront à résoudre leur ancienne union avec les peuples voisins.

Dans ces moments d'angoisse et d'incertitude au sujet du sort de ma patrie, c'est vers Votre majesté que mes yeux se tournent. Son cœur plein d'amour pour les maux de l'humanité souffrante, sa haute et généreuse sagesse daigneront contribuer à aider la Pologne a trouver les voies pratiques pour enrayer et écarter les dangers mortels qui menacent mon pays déjà si éprouve.

dans l'espoir que Votre Majesté daignera écouter la supplique d'un patriote polonais, j'ai l'honneur

Sir

de rester de Votre Majesté les plus humble et respectueux serviteur

Ladislav Prince Lubomirski

Berne 11 octobre 1918”.

to conduct a federalist policy with its eastern neighbours<sup>992</sup>. It seems clear that Lubomirski understood that the best way to contain the Bolsheviks and prevent them from attacking Poland was to keep the German armies east of Poland, and this was a better solution, in his view, than Poland sending its troops to the area now controlled by the German army.

In relation to the question of the German troops east of Poland in late 1918, Norman Davies explains that whereas France was in favour of “an immediate evacuation” of the German troops in *Ober-Ost*, Great Britain and the US wanted these troops to remain longer in the area “in order to prevent a Bolshevik invasion of Europe”<sup>993</sup>.

It is also important to mention that Lubomirski’s letter to Alfonso XIII was forwarded by the King’s particular secretary to then Spain’s State Minister Eduardo Dato on October 21, 1918<sup>994</sup>. On top of that, it must be also explained that no response by the Spanish monarch to Lubomirski’s letter has been found in the researched diplomatic documentation in Spain’s National Historical Archive.

In addition, it is important to explain that on October 19, 1918 Spain’s Ambassador in Berlin Polo Bernabé reported to Spain’s state minister that he had received a request that was similar to the one that the Spanish king had received from Lubomirski, asking to prevent the German troops from being withdrawn from the former Eastern Front. In this case, the request received by the Spanish ambassador came from Ukraine’s minister in Berlin and other diplomatic representatives in the German capital of new states emerging from the Russian disintegration, such as Latgalia’s diplomatic representative, about whom Polo had reported in a previous telegram<sup>995</sup>. Polo Bernabé informed that these post-Russian states’ representatives feared the: “[...]immediate withdrawal of the German troops, which would mean the total devastation of their territories and the death of a large part of their inhabitants as long as [the Entente] didn’t decide to organize other military forces that guarantee them against the Bolshevist terrorism”<sup>996</sup>.

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<sup>992</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>993</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920, op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>994</sup> AHN, H3024, 21.10.1918, particular secretary of Spain’s King Alfonso XIII, Emilio María de Torres González Arnao to Spain’s State Minister Eduardo Dato.

<sup>995</sup> AHN, H3024, 19.10.1918, Spain’s ambassador in Berlín Polo Bernabé to Spain’s state minister Marquis of Lema (referring to : President of the regional Parliamente of Latgalia Baron Rodolphe Engelhardt to Spain’s ambassador in Berlin Polo Bernabé).

<sup>996</sup> *Ibidem*, Spain’s ambassador in Berlín Polo Bernabé to Spain’s state minister Marquis of Lema. Original quoted text: “[la retirada inmediata de las tropas alemanas que significaría la devastación total de sus territorios y

It must also be explained that Lubomirski contacted Spain's King Alfonso XIII once again in regard to the Bolshevik threat in January 1920, when the Polish-Soviet War was already a reality, although it had not entered yet its most intensive phase. On February 3, 1920, Spain's State subsecretary Emilio de Palacios wrote a letter to Spain's ambassadors in London and Paris informing them that Prince Władysław Lubomirski had sent a letter addressed to Spain's king, which Palacios was now forwarding to them, in which Lubomirski reported on "the dangers of a possible Bolshevik invasion of Poland". Palacios asked the ambassadors in London and Paris to reply to him [Palacios] arguing what interests the British monarchy and government and the French government had, respectively, in the Bolshevik danger disappearing from Poland. In addition, it is also worth explaining that on February 3, 1920 Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema wrote a letter to the King's particular Secretary Chief Emilio María de Torres confirming the reception of the January 25 correspondence including Lubomirski's letter, which Emilio María de Torres had sent him [Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema] "upon the King's request". State Minister's letter to de Torres also reported that the ambassadors in France and Great Britain had been informed about Lubomirski's letter and had been requested for info on those [British and French] governments' perspectives on the matter. Additionally and most importantly, in his letter to the King's secretary, State Minister Marquis of Lema suggested that if the King thought it was a good idea, the King could reply to Lubomirski that "Spain takes seriously what he reported and within its possibilities it worries about Poland's fate"<sup>997</sup>. The original text of the January 1920 letter sent by Lubomirski has not been found in the same folder of the 'Ministerio de Exteriores' (Foreign Affairs Ministry) collection of Spain's National Historical Archive in which the related correspondence has been found, and might be misplaced in another folder or lost.

The story of January 1920 Władysław Lubomirski's letter to King Alfonso XIII in which the Polish aristocrat warned about a potential Bolshevik invasion of Poland did not end yet. On February 21, 1920, Spain's ambassador in London Alfonso Merry reported that he "confidentially" informed British Foreign Minister Lord Curzon about Lubomirski's letter. Merry added that on February 19 Lord Curzon replied to him, arguing the following:

"[...]The Russian Soviet's government has made peace propositions to the Polish government and the latter is thinking about its answer. During the recent visit of

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la muerte de gran parte de sus habitantes mientras no se decidan a organizar otras fuerzas militares que les garanticen contra el terrorismo bolchevista".

<sup>997</sup> AHN, H2650, 3.02.1920, Spain's state minister Marquis of Lema to King Alfonso XIII's private secretary Emilio María de Torres.

Mr. Patek to London, he had a long meeting with the British Prime Minister in which Lloyd George clearly exposed that: “the British government didn’t take the responsibility to advise the Polish government to continue the war with the Bolsheviks and could only advise it [The Polish government] to take the resolution the most convenient to Polish interests”<sup>998</sup>.

### **Diplomatic evolution and armistice proposals until the peace negotiations**

A lot of attention was paid by both Spanish newspapers and Spanish diplomacy to the diplomatic contacts between both sides of the war in regard to starting and maintaining negotiations of an armistice. Agüera thoroughly reported on the back and forth communications between Poland, Soviet Russia and England.

In addition, the Soviet request of peace to Poland in December and January was commented in the Spanish press, both by Granzów de la Cerda and Sofía Casanova. On her article published on March 31, 1920 on ‘ABC’, Sofía Casanova explained that “the Bolsheviks, the commissaires, who martyred so many bodies of innocent Poles and who detest Poland for its resistance to the propagation of communism, send to the Varsovian government a tempting radiogram proposing peace”<sup>999</sup>. Furthermore, Casanova described the Bolshevik document including a peace proposal as “disturbing”. She highlighted that this happened after a “bloody” war between Poles and Soviets for 18 months. However, Casanova highlighted Poland’s historical endurance in front of its “enemies”. In addition, Casanova described the reactions in Poland to the peace proposal document received from the Bolsheviks. She mentioned “hatred” and “untrust”, and stated that “since there was not ever a Tsar or Russian politician who was loyal to Poland, it is known that neither these three names [...] Lenin, Trotsky, Chicherin will be loyal to Poland”<sup>1000</sup>. Casanova claimed that Piłsudski would ignore the Russian proposal but the socialists and Jews were “enthusiastic about it”. Casanova added

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<sup>998</sup> *Ibidem*, 21.02.1920, Spain’s ambassador in London Alfonso Merry to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor). Original quoted text: “[...]el Gobierno de los Soviets de Rusia ha hecho proposiciones de paz al gobierno polaco y el segundo se halla meditando la respuesta. Añade que durante la reciente visita a Londres de Mr. Patek este ha tenido una larga conferencia este ha tenido una larga conferencia con el Primer Ministro británico en la cual Mr. Lloyd George expuso claramente que el gobierno británico no tomaba la responsabilidad de aconsejar al de Polonia que continuase la guerra con los bolcheviquis y únicamente le podía aconsejar que adoptasen la resolución que pareciese más conveniente a los intereses polacos”.

<sup>999</sup> “El fracaso de Europa IV”, ‘ABC’, 31.03.1920, p. 3. Original quoted text: “Los bolcheviques, los comisarios, que han martirizado tantos cuerpos de inocentes polacos y que detestan a Polonia por su resistencia a la propagación del comunismo, envían al gobierno varsoviano un radiograma tentador proponiendo la paz”.

<sup>1000</sup> *Ibidem*.

that in the Polish Sejm there was a division of opinions regarding whether to accept or discard Soviet Russia's offer, and the question was being "discussed" and would be solved in the next parliamentary gatherings. Casanova claimed that those Polish politicians who were in favour of accepting the Bolshevik proposal were right because, "given the Entente's attitude, Poland at the gates of Russia and Germany, cannot sustain a war without the aid of its allies. From France, England and Italy it should expect it since they reached an agreement with Russia". However, Casanova argued that Polish people were tired of wars after six years of them and, in addition, there was a hard economic situation, including "shortages". So, Casanova claimed the Polish government should prioritize ensuring stability and food to Poles. On the matter of the Soviet proposal, Casanova claimed that "the government will conditionally respond to Russia. Will the latter accept? We shall see"<sup>1001</sup>.

From his side, on March 10, 1920 Agüera interpreted that the Soviets were playing a double game and were being dishonest with Poland, meaning that the Bolsheviks attempted to strike Poland in order to "accelerate peace negotiations" but Poland's military performances had forced them to be the ones requesting peace, without honest intentions<sup>1002</sup>.

In relation to this Russian double game with Poland, clear mentions to the dishonesty of the Soviet peace negotiation proposals to Poland in early 1920 due to Soviet intention to continue military operations, are seen in Nowak's<sup>1003</sup> and on Szczepański's<sup>1004</sup> works. Whereas Andrzej Nowak explains that on the same day, December 22, 1919, when Chicherin sent a note to the Polish government with "a proposition to immediate start of peace negotiations", Trocki "ordered the strengthening "with all means of the 12th army", standing against the south wing of the Poles"<sup>1005</sup>, Szczepański argues that the peace proposals from the Bolsheviks to Poland at the beginning of 1920, in reality, only wanted to ensure the Soviet Russians time to recover militarily after fighting their internal Russian enemies, before starting their military expansion towards the West<sup>1006</sup>. In addition, Nowak explains that on March 27, 1920 a "concrete proposition for the start of peace negotiations" was sent to Chicherin by Patek, proposing

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<sup>1001</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1002</sup> AHN, H1681, 10.03.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1003</sup> A. Nowak, *Kłęska imperium zła, Rok 1920, op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>1004</sup> J. Szczepański, *Władze i społeczeństwo Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej wobec bolszewickiego zagrożenia w 1920 roku, op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>1005</sup> A. Nowak, *Kłęska Imperium Zła, Rok 1920, op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>1006</sup> J. Szczepański, *Władze i społeczeństwo Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej wobec bolszewickiego zagrożenia w 1920 roku, op. cit.*, p. 53.

Borysov as the place for the negotiations. Nowak argues that if accepted by the Bolsheviks, this proposal could have stopped “the Soviet plan to strike on Minsk” and the fact that this proposal was refused by the Bolsheviks is a proof that these earlier had already decided to attack in the direction of Warsaw<sup>1007</sup>. Meanwhile, Szczepański explains that in early 1920 “Piłsudski still did not believe in the honesty of Lenin’s peaceful intentions”<sup>1008</sup>.

It is also worth highlighting that on March 23, 1920, ‘El Sol’, Tadeusz Peiper explained that he had had a conversation with Władysław Skrzyński<sup>1009</sup>, new Polish plenipotentiary minister in Madrid, and Peiper explained that he had great hopes of Skrzyński clarifying to him the situation of the Polish-Soviet conflict. Peiper wrote that the Polish diplomat told him that he had not been in Warsaw the previous two weeks to be updated on the Polish-Soviet question, but that Piłsudski was interviewed on the question by the Warsaw correspondent of the French newspaper ‘Le Petit Parisien’. This is why Peiper decided to share the content of that interview with his Spanish readers, and quoted a long fragment of Piłsudski’s words for the Parisian newspaper, in which Piłsudski highlighted Poland’s intention to negotiate peace but stated that Poland didn’t want impositions and “threats”<sup>1010</sup>.

Regarding the belligerents’ alleged attempts to initiate peace negotiations, it is worth highlighting that whereas Casanova expressed that she was in favour of Poland accepting the Soviet Russian armistice proposal<sup>1011</sup>, Chwalba explains that Endecja (National Democrats) was in favour of accepting it as well—because this would avoid a Polish-Ukrainian alliance, the author explains<sup>1012</sup>. It is worth mentioning here that as in many other situations and dilemmas in Polish politics during this project’s researched period, although not always, this time Casanova was clearly aligned with Endecja’s views.

On to another question related to this war, it must be explained that the Bolsheviks’ peace requests in the first months of 1920 and the unofficial peace terms demanded by the Polish side to the Bolsheviks were reported by Agüera to Spain’s state minister on February 26, 1920. Agüera reported to the minister that the Sejm’s Foreign Affairs Commission approved

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<sup>1007</sup> A. Nowak, *Kłęska Imperium Zła, Rok 1920, op. cit.*, p. 69.

<sup>1008</sup> J. Szczepański, *Władze i społeczeństwo Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej wobec bolszewickiego zagrożenia w 1920 roku, op. cit.*, p.54. Original quoted words: „Piłsudski wciąż nie wierzył w szczerłość pokojowych intencji Lenina”.

<sup>1009</sup> Plenipotentiary Minister of the Polish Republic in Spain from March 11, 1920 to August 31, 1921.

<sup>1010</sup> “Dice el ministro de Polonia en Madrid. Polonia y la paz con Rusia. Declaraciones de Pilsudski”. ‘El Sol’, 23.03.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1011</sup> “El fracaso de Europa IV”, ‘ABC’, 31.03.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1012</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920, op. cit.*, p. 162-163.

Poland's response to the Soviets' peace proposal, and also reported that even though the official content of the Polish response to the Bolsheviks was not known, the Spanish diplomat had learned from his contacts among politicians and diplomats in Warsaw that officially Poland wanted peace. Agüera summarized the response that Poland would give to Soviet Russia in the following points: demanding the Bolsheviks to go behind the 1772 border and organize plebiscites in disputed territories; creation of a neutral zone behind the border; reparations to Poland for the period since 1914 until then; peace conditions to be approved "by representatives of the whole Russian nation". The Spanish diplomat added that there might be secret clauses referring to Polish rights to decide on the Ukrainian independence question. What is important here, Agüera regarded these Polish conditions as "exaggerated" and added that they "place both the Moscow government and the allies in front of a problem of difficult solution"<sup>1013</sup>.

It is also worth underlining that whereas in a text published on April 8, 1920 on 'La Correspondencia de España' Granzów de la Cerda referred to the Polish requirements for peace sent by Polish Foreign Minister Patek to the Soviets after some preliminary talks in Warsaw also involving Romania, Latvia and Finland<sup>1014</sup>, on March 22, 1920 Agüera reported to Spain's state minister that Patek worked on a response to the Soviets regarding their peace proposal along with "delegates from Finland, Latvia and Romania" and sent it to the Entente through diplomats representing France, Great Britain and Italy, in Warsaw. Agüera included the content of the document listing Polish conditions for peace with the Soviets:

"1. Anulacion of the crime of Poland's partitions and disannexation of the part [of Poland] which Russia seized. 2. Recognition of the different states that have been formed because of the Russian dismembering. 3. restitution of all the goods that the Polish state possessed before 1772. This goods have to be returned to Poland. Restitution of the archives and libraries, etc, compensation for the losses suffered by Poles during the 1914 war and during the 1917 revolution. 4. Ratification of the treaty by Russia. 5. Poland will make a statute regarding the fate of the territories located to the West of the border that existed in the year 1772, by means of a plebiscite. As it seems, the extensive note ends with a thorough detailing of each of the five points above

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<sup>1013</sup> AHN, H1681, 26.02.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1014</sup> "Desde Polonia. La respuesta polaca a las proposiciones de paz de los Soviets", 'La Correspondencia de España', 8.04.1920, p. 1.



indicated, claiming that if Russia accepts the conditions proposed by Poland, the peace negotiations will be able to get started immediately”<sup>1015</sup>.

On his March 22 report for state minister, Agüera also explained that the fact that Zdzisław Okęcki, Director of the Political-Diplomatic Department in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, informed the Sejm’s Foreign Affairs Commission about the document surprised one of the Entente diplomats in Warsaw, whom Agüera talked with (without revealing his name) because minister Patek, when delivering the document asked Okęcki to deliver it confidentially. This Entente-country diplomat believed, Agüera explained, that the Polish government on purpose wanted the document to be known by the Foreign Press to check how foreign newspapers reacted. Moreover, the Entente country diplomat told Agüera that the reaction of the Foreign Press would be quite unfavourable to Poland’s exaggerated *annexionist* ambitions. The Warsaw-based Spanish diplomat also explained that he talked with a second diplomat from an Entente country in Warsaw, and this second diplomat had told foreign minister Patek that the conditions demanded by Poland were exaggerated and that with these conditions Poland risked to be accused of having “imperialist ambitions”. As this second Entente diplomat told Agüera, Patek replied to the diplomat, in reference to the Polish government’s proposed conditions for peace to the Bolsheviks, that “his purpose was only to find a wide base to negotiate”<sup>1016</sup>.

It must be noted that, in regard to the project of the Polish conditions for a peace negotiation with Soviet Russia, Jędruszczak explains that “in March and April of 1920 the Polish office of preparation works for the peace conference with Soviet Russia prepared a project of peace treaty between Poland the Soviet Russian Republic. This project was never officially presented to the Soviet side. It confirms what were the intentions of the Polish government”<sup>1017</sup>. Jędruszczak lists the exact included points in the project as follows:

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<sup>1015</sup> *Ibidem*, 22.03.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor). Original quoted text: “1º- anulación del crimen de los repartos de Polonia y desanexión de la parte de la que se apoderó Rusia. 2º-reconocimiento de los diferentes estados que se han formado a causa de la desmembración rusa.3º-restitucion de todos los bienes que el estado polaco poseía antes de 1772. estos bienes han de ser devueltos a Polonia. Restitución de los archivos y bibliotecas, etc. indemnización por las pérdidas sufridas por los polacos durante la guerra de 1914 y durante la revolución de 1917. 4º- ratificación del tratado por Rusia.5º-Polonia hará un estatuto respecto a la suerte que habrán de correr los territorios situados al Oeste de la frontera que existía en el año 1772, por medio de un plebiscito”.

<sup>1016</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1017</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Dyplomatyczne, polityczne i wojskowe przygotowania do ofensywy*, op. cit., p. 325. Original quoted text: „W marcu-kwietniu 1920 r. Biuro Prac Przygotowawczych do Konferencji Pokojowej z Rosją Radziecką przygotowało projekt traktatu pokojowego między Polska a RSFRR. Projekt ów nigdy nie został oficjalnie przedstawiony stronie radzieckiej. Świadczy on jednak o tym, jakie były zamiary rządu polskiego”.

“The resolution of the question of future of the lands taken from Poland by Russia after 1772, is a thing exclusively of mutual understanding between Poland and the populations of these lands, the Soviet Army is going to withdraw beyond the 1772 border and will be after the signature of the treaty demobilized to ½ of its current state, after the civil war a full demobilization of the Russian army will take place, only two years’ soldiers will remain armed. Russia is going to return to Poland the collections of artworks, libraries, archives, and industrial and transport tools and also directly after the signature of the treaty and during the next 10 years will transfer to Poland significant sums of money, prefabricated materials, industrial raw materials and agriculture articles”<sup>1018</sup>.

It must be highlighted that the project Jędruszczak refers to did not mention a compensation for the damages committed by Russia in the Great War, and as a result of 1917 Revolution, in the Polish lands, which Agüera did mention. In addition, Agüera’s report was much more detailed about these conditions than the project Jędruszczak refers to.

It is also important to underline that the peace conditions presented by the Bolsheviks in the first months of 1920 before the Polish offensive in Ukraine were a ceasefire in the whole front<sup>1019</sup>, as well as Tallin as the place for negotiations, with the alternatives of Moscow, Petrograd and Warsaw<sup>1020</sup>.

Advancing in the calendar of the conflict, on April 29, 1920 Agüera reported that the Soviets sent the Polish government another radio telegram to start peace negotiations despite Poland’s previous refusal of an armistice. It can be interpreted that by Poland’s refusal of an armistice, Agüera referred to the fact that Poland refused the Soviet demand to start negotiations of a “ceasefire in the whole front”, which the Soviet Russians conveyed along with their refusal of Borysov as the place for peace negotiations, as Jędruszczak explains<sup>1021</sup>. This Soviet request

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<sup>1018</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: „rozwiązanie sprawy dalszego losu ziem zabranych Polsce przez Rosję po 1772r. jest rzeczą wyłącznie wzajemnego porozumienia się Polski z ludnością tych ziem; armia rosyjska wycofa się poza granice 1772 r. i będzie po podpisaniu traktatu zdemobilizowana do ½ swego stanu, po zakończeniu wojny domowej nastąpi pełna demobilizacja armii rosyjskiej, pod broń pozostają tylko jedynie dwa roczniki. Rosja zwróci Polsce zbiory dzieł sztuki, biblioteka, archiwa oraz urządzenia przemysłowe i transportowe, a także bezpośrednio po podpisaniu traktatu i w ciągu najbliższych 10 lat świadczyć będzie na rzecz Polski znaczne sumy pieniężne, półfabrykaty, surowce przemysłowe i artykuły rolne”.

<sup>1019</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 328.

<sup>1020</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 327.

<sup>1021</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Dyplomatyczne, polityczne i wojskowe przygotowania do ofensywy*, op. cit., p. 328.

was communicated to Polish public opinion on an official institutional note published on April 20, as Agüera reported<sup>1022</sup>. Jędruszczak adds that:

“The [April 20 Polish] communication included a declaration by the Polish government writing that the Polish command does not intend to conduct aggressive actions that difficult the negotiations. The Soviet Russian government reacted with a strengthening of the armies concentration, about which the Polish side treats the conflict on the negotiation place as a pretext to its postponement. At the end the communication announced that the Polish government is ready in every moment to conduct negotiations”<sup>1023</sup>.

Meanwhile, Norman Davies explains that in regard to potential peace negotiations with the Bolsheviks:

“in the spring of 1920 Piłsudski stood in front of a real dilemma. He didn't have any certainty that his army would hold if the war prolongs, he didn't have any illusions regarding the war's fate, if the Red Army hits first. It wasn't easy for him to conclude peace, as long as this could be understood as yielding to those striking, it wasn't easy for him to start a war without at the same time downplaying the advice by the allies. At the same time, he could not bear the threat of war as accompaniment to peace talks”<sup>1024</sup>.

On an article published on June 10, Casanova stated that “Poland did not want, and still does not want, peace with the Bolsheviks, and Russia-because of her international policy-wants to follow the war with Poland”<sup>1025</sup>. She added that after two months of diplomatic correspondence between Poland and Soviet Russia regarding potential peace negotiations, the

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<sup>1022</sup> AHN, H1681, 26.02.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1023</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Dyplomatyczne, polityczne i wojskowe przygotowania do ofensywy*, *op. cit.*, p. 328. Original quoted text: „Komunikat podał oświadczenie rządu polskiego, iż dowództwo polskie nie zamierza agresywnymi działaniami utrudniać rokowań. Na to rząd Rosji Radzieckiej zareagował wzmożeniem koncentracji wojsk, wobec czego strona polska traktuje spór o miejsce rokowań jako pretekst do ich odroczenia. W zakończeniu komunikat zapowiadał, że rząd polski jest gotów w każdej chwili do podjęcia pertraktacji”.

<sup>1024</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: Wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 96. Original quoted text: „Na wiosnę 1920 roku Piłsudski stanął przed rzeczywistym dylematem. Nie miał żadnej pewności, że jego armia wytrzyma, jeśli wojna będzie się przedłużać, nie miał żadnych iluzji co do jej losu, jeśli Armia Czerwona uderzy pierwsza. Niełatwo było mu zawrzeć pokój, dopóki mógł on być interpretowany jako ustępstwo na rzecz strajkujących, niełatwo było mu rozpocząć wojnę, nie okazując zarazem lekceważenia dla rad aliantów. Zarazem nie mógł ścierpieć groźby wojna jako akompaniamentu do rozmów o pokoju”.

<sup>1025</sup> “¡Guerra! La gran ofensiva polaca”, ‘ABC’, 10.06.1920, p. 3.

situation led to a Polish military offensive. This change of the war situation was caused, she argued, by “an incident in the negotiations between both countries” that she regarded as “deliberate”, which namely was the disagreement between both sides regarding the place where the peace negotiations should take place, in order to block them. Casanova claimed that Polish leaders “knew beforehand” that the Bolsheviks would not approve Borysov as the site to host the negotiations. In fact, she regarded this diplomatic rupture as “the most interesting moment in the diplomatic relations between rampant Russia and this very serene Republic, which keeps the nobiliary aristocratism of national culture and tradition”<sup>1026</sup>. Casanova also highlighted that Piłsudski was already in the front to get the troops ready for an attack on the Bolsheviks and to encourage his soldiers “with his faith in victory”. In addition, Casanova saw “the confluence of two powerful and destructive forces” in the renewed conflict. In relation to this clash idea, she added that the new phase of the armed conflict would be:

“a tremendous collision of two hatred, as two deadly opposite tendencies, the red one wishing to implant its demolishing rite in the world and the other making an effort to block its access and destroy the enemy in the battlefield”<sup>1027</sup>.

Casanova also claimed that she was scared by this war in which “prisoners are not made” and in which those soldiers captured were killed. Casanova saw confidence in the victory on both sides of the war. She assured that Polish soldiers “go to the Christian crusade against the atheism monster” and she also explained that young Poles also got involved in the war campaign, behind the front, by “replacing soldiers in offices, warehouses and technical services”. Casanova explained in a very descriptive way: “War! War! is the clamour of the youth, who has desire to behead the muscovite Antichrist[...]” and added: “War! War! From the other side they also scream getting ready to the defence and to the attack the begodded Russians”<sup>1028</sup>.

On June 18, 1920 Agüera reported to Spain’s State Ministry that the army commission of the Sejm asked for the “immediate incorporation to the army” of the 1895-1902 classes, among other groups, like those who already served, from the 1885 to 1894 years. The Spanish diplomat explained that this project was approved by all the groups present in the Sejm during

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<sup>1026</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1027</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1028</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 3-4. Original quoted words: “¡Guerra! ¡Guerra! Es el clamor de la juventud que ansia degollar al Antecristo moscovita [...]”; “¡Guerra! ¡Guerra! Gritan también del otro lado, aprestándose a la defensa y al ataque los endiosados rusos”.

the voting. In relation to this, Agüera argued that it was surprising to see, that, on the one hand, there were talks in Poland about starting peace talks with the Soviets, but, that on the other hand, projects like this one to make the army grow were approved in the Parliament, what, in the diplomat's view, "seem to indicate Poland's intention to continue the war with more energy than ever". Agüera reported that "a high personality in Polish politics", whose name he didn't reveal, explained to him that even if there were negotiations with the Soviets, the Polish army would need to protect all the eastern front borders because the negotiations would be very long and even if these were concluded with an agreement, such an accord could give very little safety to Poland when it comes to the country's eastern borders. In addition, Agüera reported that Piłsudski wanted a military victory before negotiating peace with the Soviets and, according to Agüera, Piłsudski had "his pride wounded". This is why Piłsudski, in Agüera's view, wanted to "continue the operations in Ukraine with the intention of maybe reconquering Kiev, because he doesn't want to fail to the commitment taken with the new state whose independence he recognized". The diplomat added that this would allow the Polish leader to be in a better initial position to negotiate with the Soviets. Agüera added many in Poland agreed on Piłsudski's strategy. However, Agüera wrote to state minister that, in his view, an attack against the Soviets in Ukraine or in the north would make the situation in Poland worse, and this movement in Ukraine would be seen by many Polish politicians like a copy of the first offensive in Ukraine, which Agüera saw as a failure. Spain's minister in Warsaw added that if an attack wouldn't work out this second time either, Piłsudski would lose its authority and prestige<sup>1029</sup>. References in scientific literature to Piłsudski's intention to launch an offensive against the Bolsheviks in Ukraine for the second time are not found either in Chwalba's work, or Davies's or Jędruszczak's.

In addition, also on his June 18 report, Agüera stated that "most of the Polish population wants peace, which will be the only way to allow them to rebuild their cities, exploit their fields and activate their commerce and industry, keeping only active an army that, as per its mission, has to be a cordon sanitaire in the eastern border"<sup>1030</sup>. It can be interpreted that Agüera sensed tiredness of war in Polish society and among part of Polish politicians, and also that he had the

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<sup>1029</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.06.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1030</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "La mayoría del pueblo polaco desea la paz que será la única que le permitiría rehacer sus ciudades, explotar sus campos y poner en marcha su comercio e industria, manteniendo en pie solamente un ejército que tenga por misión la de ser un cordón sanitario en la frontera oriental".

impression that a war with Soviet Russia beyond the purely Polish ethnographic lands was not well seen in the country, where many preferred peace with the Bolsheviks.

Agüera added that even in case Poland won against the Soviets in another offensive in Ukraine, it would not obtain any results from this victory because “England negotiated and talked about peace with [Leonid] Krassine” and in the allied countries workers didn’t allow their governments to send munitions to Poland”<sup>1031</sup>. Moreover, Agüera concluded that:

“in this difficult situation what is more convenient for Poland is to live in the best possible harmony with her neighbour, Russia, with which it has not only ties of race affinity but above all material interests, because in the future of the development of Poland’s natural wealthiness, Russia would be surely its first consumer”<sup>1032</sup>.

In other words, Agüera appealed to Slavism and, above all, to economic interests as strong arguments for Poland to want a peace agreement with Soviet Russia, especially when thinking about the future of the new Polish state.

Even in early 1921, despite an armistice and a preliminary peace agreement being in place, accusations between both belligerents echoed in the reports written by Spain’s diplomatic representative in Poland. In this sense, it is important to highlight that on January 30, 1921 Agüera reported to state minister that a Soviet Ukrainian member complained to the Polish government about the latter allowing Petlura’s insurgents to go through Polish territory, what was denied by the Poland’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, namely by Konstanty Skirmunt, who highlighted in his response the fact that Soviets did not respect the fulfilment of the Riga agreement as a hamper to positive relations between both states.

In addition, on January 30, 1921 Agüera reported that on January 27 the commission with the duty of ensuring that Soviet Russia paid Poland reparations, as per the Riga negotiations, had arrived in the Polish capital. According to Agüera, the commission was led by Kazimierz Olszowski, who, as Agüera reported, brought gold and precious objects taken from Russia with the alleged value of the first assigned payment for 10 million francs, but this was assessed in reality at 7 million francs once deposited in the Polish State Bank. Agüera explained that,

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<sup>1031</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1032</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “en esta difícil situación lo que más le conviene es vivir en la mejor armonía posible con su vecina: Rusia con la cual la unen no solamente lazos de afinidad de raza sino ante todo sus intereses materiales, pues para el desenvolvimiento futuro de las riquezas naturales de Polonia, Rusia sería forzosamente su primera consumidora”.

initially, the Bolsheviks didn't want to send these funds as a protest against alleged Polish help to Petlura's Ukrainian insurgents but, in Agüera's view, probably the Soviets finally understood that such help didn't exist. Agüera added that it was difficult to find out what exactly was happening in Ukraine because a lot of information, daily, coming from there was generated by Ukrainian and Bolshevik propaganda, and it was difficult to come across true information<sup>1033</sup>.

### **Spanish predictions during the Polish-Soviet War**

A series of predictions about the outcome of the war at its different stages are found in the examined Spanish primary sources, both in the press and in diplomatic correspondence.

The first one occurred on July 4, 1920, when Agüera forecasted that by end of July or early August the Soviet troops would try to take Minsk and Vilna by means of an offensive and that in order to counteract this possible attack, general Stanisław Szeptycki, "one of the most prestigious in this [Polish] army" was getting ready and expressed his confidence on his troops and their victory to block the Bolsheviks<sup>1034</sup>. Secondly, on August 12 Casanova stated that the Entente's help would arrive already too late to face the Bolsheviks' big attack and highlighted these were already "at the gates of Minsk and Vilna, historical Polish regions, which they will have taken before my letter reaches Madrid"<sup>1035</sup>. In addition, on August 13, 1920 'ABC's French contributor based in Spain Gaston-Routier explained that "the red armies keep invading Poland, the Polish disaster is nearing a catastrophe without solution". He also mentioned there were news about a "revolutionary committee" that was to be created in the Polish capital. The French columnist stated that from a Polish point of view there was no reason to be optimistic regarding this war<sup>1036</sup>. However, five days later, on August 18, 1920 Agüera claimed that the Weygand plan contributed to the predictions going on the direction of a Polish military success<sup>1037</sup>. Agüera's prediction was right. On October 19, 1920 Agüera, even more optimistic than in August, stated that since the future was unpredictable it could happen that the Russian and other forces fighting the Bolsheviks, supported by France and Poland, could

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<sup>1033</sup> AHN, H1681, 30.01.1921. Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1034</sup> *Ibidem*, 4.07.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Agüera to state Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1035</sup> "Páginas de la guerra. El exterminio de Polonia", 'ABC', 12.08.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1036</sup> "Ludendorff, Winston Churchill... y la realidad", 'ABC', 13.08.1920, p. 8.

<sup>1037</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.08.1920 Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

“dethrone forever the Red Tsars of the Kremlin that for more than two years have totally destroyed the former vast Romanoff Empire”<sup>1038</sup>. Here, something obvious must be underlined: Agüera’s wish did not come true because the Bolsheviks remained in power in Russia after the Polish-Soviet War.

## Spa Conference

Not many comments on the Spa Conference in relation with the Polish-Soviet War are found in the Spanish press. However, Agüera placed a lot of importance on the negotiations that during the conference took place to look for a diplomatic solution to the conflict that would be positive for both the Entente and Poland.

On July 4, 1920 Agüera claimed that Poland sent Stanisław Patek, former minister of foreign affairs, as the country’s representative, with other civil servants, to the Spa Conference, in order to protect Poland’s interests in the conference’s discussions regarding the possible peace with the Bolsheviks<sup>1039</sup>. Two weeks later, on July 19, Agüera reported on prime minister Władysław Grabski’s participation in the Spa Conference and on the later Grabski’s announcement that Britain presented the Bolsheviks a program for an armistice with Poland. Grabski, Agüera pointed out, did not mention the conditions of such proposed armistice but Agüera believed that these conditions were:

“1st Poland must renounce any policy that is imperialist

2<sup>nd</sup> It must be entrusted to conditions of the Supreme Council of the allies. so that it resolves all disputed issues, such as the Dantzig and the Silesian Teschen

3rd It must withdraw its troops on the Grodno-Brest-Litowsk line and in the south 50 km south-east of Przemyśl.

4th The armies of the Soviets will be able to advance to a line located 50 kilometres from the one occupied by the Poles.

5th If the Russians cross the fixed line, the allies will give Poland their full help.

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<sup>1038</sup> *Ibidem*, 19.10.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1039</sup> *Ibidem*, 4.07.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).



6th The Conference will be convened in London where peace will be discussed between the Soviets, on the one hand, and Poland, Lithuania, Finland and Latvia, on the other”<sup>1040</sup>.

Agüera also stated he was not sure if the Soviets would accept such British proposition for an armistice with Poland and rumours on the topic were “contradictory”. He then argued that, in theory, Lenin would be interested in such option because for the Soviets the British recognition of their government as the valid Russian government would somehow be a success<sup>1041</sup>.

Polish historian Tadeusz Jędruszczak explains that what Poland, in reality Grabski as its representative, accepted, after the 10 July talks, in the Spa conference, was the following:

“a)Initiate and sign an immediate ceasefire, taking as its base the border of December 8, 1919 in the character of provisional border, with this that the Red Army will withdraw 50 km to the east from that line, Wilno is given to Lithuania, in Eastern Galicia the border line will be the current front line, from which each of the sides withdraws 10 km and a neutral zone will be created.

b)after the conclusion of the ceasefire a conference has to take place as soon as possible under the auspices of the Entente in London with the participation of Poland, the Soviet Russian republic, Finland, Lithuania and Latvia and the representatives of Eastern Galicia[...] with the goal of establishing a lasting peace between the Soviet Russian Republic and its neighbours.

c) Poland will accept the decision by the Higher Council of the Entente countries in the matter of the Lithuanian borders, the future of Eastern Galicia, the Cieszyn question and the future Gdansk Poland treaty. The British government committed to forward to the Soviet Russian republic identical propositions. It was decided that in if the government of the Soviet Russian Republic didn’t conclude an armistice with Poland,

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<sup>1040</sup> *Ibidem*, 19.07.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor). Original quoted text: “1° Polonia deberá renunciar a cualquier política que sea imperialista. 2° Deberá confiarse si condiciones al Consejo Supremo de los aliados. para que este resuelva todas las cuestiones en litigio, tales como l de Dantzig y la de Silesia del Teschen. 3° Deberá retirar sus tropas sobre la línea de Grodno-Brest-Litowsk y en el sur a 50 km al sur-este de Premzyl. 4° Los ejércitos de los soviets podrán avanzar hasta una línea situada a 50 kilómetros de la que ocupan los polacos. 5° Si los rusos traspasan la línea fijada, los aliados prestarán a Polonia su ayuda integra. 6° La Conferencia será convocada en Londres en donde habrá de discutirse la paz entre los Soviets, por una parte, y Polonia, Lituania, Finlandia y Letonia, por otra”.

<sup>1041</sup> AHN, H1681, 19.07.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

the Entente would help Poland, especially with war material, with the goal of defending its independence”<sup>1042</sup>.

When comparing the conditions of the peace agreement established in Spa, described by Agüera according to his sources, and the agreed armistice conditions described by Jędruszczak we see that: Agüera was right when writing that according to the agreed proposal to the Soviets, the Red Army would have to remain 50 km from the established border line. In the second point Agüera did not mention Eastern Galicia and Lithuania, while Jędruszczak did write that the future of the region would be decided by the Entente’s Higher Council, as well as that of Cieszyn and Lithuania, but Jędruszczak did not mention Danzig, whereas Agüera did. Both Agüera and Jędruszczak refer to the Conference in London including Soviet Russia, Poland, Finland and Latvia, but Jędruszczak also mentions that representatives of Eastern Galicia were also supposed to attend the London conference, whereas Agüera does not mention this. Jędruszczak uses the term “border of December 8, 1919 in the character of provisional border” whereas Agüera called it “the Grodno-Brest-Litovsk line”. Whereas Jędruszczak explains that “in Eastern Galicia the border line will be the current front line”, Agüera just wrote that the Soviet troops had to “withdraw in the south 50 km south-east from Przemyśl” Significantly, Agüera referred to the condition agreed in Spa that “If the Russians cross the fixed line, the allies will give Poland their full help”, whereas Jędruszczak doesn’t mention it, at least not among the agreed conditions in Spa. Agüera also mentions the very vague condition consisting in the fact that “Poland must renounce any policy that is imperialist”, to which Jędruszczak does not refer.

One of the few comments on the Spa conference in relation to the Polish-Soviet War in the Spanish press appeared on August 5, 1920 on ‘La Correspondencia de España’ and was made by Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda. The Spanish-Polish diplomat wondered the following

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<sup>1042</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Bitwa Warszawska. Rozejm, op. cit.*, p. 371. Original quoted text:

“a)zainicjować i podpisać niezwłoczne rozejm, przyjmując jako jego podstawę granice z 8 grudnia 1919r.w charakterze granicy tymczasowej , z tym że Armia Czerwona cofnie się 50 km na wschód od tej linii, Wilno oddane zostanie Litwie, w Galicji Wschodniej linia rozgraniczenia będzie aktualna linia frontu, przy czym każda ze stron cofnie się o 10km i utworzona będzie strefa neutralna;

b) po zawarciu rozejmu ma odbyć się jak najrychlej pod auspicjami Ententy konferencja w Londynie z udziałem Polski, RSFRR, Finlandii, Litwy i Łotwy oraz przedstawicielei Galicji Wschodniej[...], w celu ustanowienia trwałego pokoju między RSFRR a jej sąsiadami.

c)Polska przyjmie decyzje Rady Najwyższej państw Ententy w sprawie granic litewskich, przyszłości Galicji wschodniej, sprawy cieszyńskiej i przyszłego traktatu gdańsko-polskiego. Rząd angielski zobowiązał się przekazać RSFRR identyczne propozycje. Postanowiono, że w przypadku, gdyby rząd RSFRR nie zawarł z Polska rozejmu, Ententa udzieli Polsce pomocy, zwłaszcza w materiale wojennym, w celu obrony niepodległości”.

in relation to Lloyd George's peace proposal sent to Soviet Russia: "but could the Polish nation and the National Defence Council in Warsaw accept the conditions that England demanded from Poland in the mentioned proposition?". In Granzów's view, Grabski had to wait until he was back in Warsaw to answer this question, and he did it during his meeting with the National Defence Council<sup>1043</sup>.

In relation to this, it is also worth adding that, according to another article written by Granzów and published two days later, due to the difficult war reality for Poland, the National Defence Council president attended the Spa conference himself<sup>1044</sup>. However, the National Defence Council vice-president Wincenty Witos did not attend the conference, so Granzów must have got confused or had used wrong sources in this case.

### **Entente's role in the Polish-Soviet War**

The Entente's stand towards the Polish-Soviet War was one of the most analysed topics by both the Spanish press and Spain's diplomacy (mostly Gutiérrez de Agüera but not only) in regard to the conflict's evolution, resolution and potential consequences.

The Entente's role in the conflict did not leave all Polish politicians satisfied, and neither it satisfied Sofía Casanova, who claimed that Entente's help for Poland fell short<sup>1045</sup> and also criticised England's attitude, nor it satisfied Agüera, who highlighted the internal divisions between French and Brits on the Entente's policy towards the Polish-Soviet conflict<sup>1046</sup>. However, Agüera was more positive in regard to the Entente's involvement, particularly about France's role, than Casanova and many Polish politicians, as one can read in Agüera's comments in his reports for Spain's state minister. The Spanish diplomat reinforced this idea of France's positive involvement in the war on September 26, when he claimed that the leader of People's

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<sup>1043</sup> "Spa, Londres, Moscou y Varsovia II", 'La Correspondencia de España', 5.08.1920, p. 1. Original quoted text: "¿Pero podía aceptar el pueblo polaco y el Consejo de Defensa Nacional de Varsovia las condiciones que Inglaterra exigía de Polonia en la mencionada proposición?"

<sup>1044</sup> "Desde Polonia. Ante la amenaza bolchevista", 'La Correspondencia de España', 3.08.1920, p. 1.

<sup>1045</sup> "El fracaso de Europa, IV", 'ABC', 31.03.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1046</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.08.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

Party, Wincenty Witos referred to France as the only country that really helped Poland during the difficult war situation<sup>1047</sup>.

Placing on the Western powers an important role to play in the conflict, on April 13, 1920 Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw stated that "the [Polish] Left political parties regard the Polish-Bolshevik peace not only as an internal politics question but believe it also gets mixed with the country's relations with the allied Powers: France and Great Britain"<sup>1048</sup>. So, it can be interpreted that Agüera highlighted that for Poland in the war against Soviet Russia, what was at stake was also its relations with France and Britain.

In relation to this statement, it must be stated that Agüera argued that France wanted to reconstruct a "Great Russia" to make it pay the Tsarist Russia's debt back to France, and the Spanish diplomat claimed that Great Britain had economic interests in the region West of Russia "to exploit its capital"<sup>1049</sup>. In addition, he argued that "Poland's peace programme was not positively assessed by the Entente, because, on the one hand, Agüera pointed out, Britain's goals in the region were against Poland's plan to create "a federation of the Eastern states". On the other hand, the Polish concept of a federation with nations to its East, Agüera argued, went against the French plan to reconstruct a Great Russia<sup>1050</sup>.

This way, it can be stated that Agüera, in a way, saw a strong Poland, expanded to the East, as a solution that went against both French and British plans for Russia and its own geopolitical interests. It is also worth stating that Agüera, despite seeing differences between the French and the British stands on the conflict, believed that neither of the Western powers wanted a Polish victory that resulted in a Polish border with Russia further in the East.

In regard to the Entente's reactions to the Polish offensive in Ukraine, there are two Spanish sources to be highlighted. Firstly, as Agüera reported on May 29, 1920, Polish foreign minister told the Spanish diplomat that the Western allies did not officially complain about Poland's attack in Ukraine, but:

"for reasons of internal politics that another Government of the Entente has felt compelled to make declarations in Parliament that it would not provide material aid to Poland, it has been extra-officially made to understand that particularly and even

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<sup>1047</sup> *Ibidem*, 26.09.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1048</sup> *Ibidem*, 13.09.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1049</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1050</sup> *Ibidem*.

secretly, it will continue to provide it with material and ammunition you need to continue the fight”<sup>1051</sup>.

Secondly, in a text published on ‘ABC’ on July 17, 1920, but written in June 1920, Sofía Casanova claimed that Piłsudski’s troops entrance in the Ukrainian city of Kiev was praised by the Entente, even England, which until that point was very “hostile” to the reborn Polish state<sup>1052</sup>. It can be hypothesised that Casanova, after seeing these positive reactions of France and England, expected that these countries would meaningfully help Poland in the war, and later on she was disappointed with the Entente’s engagement in the conflict and support for her adoptive country, as she expressed on an article published on August 12, 1920<sup>1053</sup>.

Previously, on May 29, 1920 Agüera had claimed that an evidence of true allied support to Poland would be:

“if the fact is confirmed, that the Chief of the French Military Mission, General [Paul] Henrys, intends to officially accompany the Chief of the Polish Nation, Marshal Piłsudski, whose departure for the front is announced for within three or four days, the date on which the counter-offensive under his command will begin[...]”<sup>1054</sup>.

With a specific perspective, on September 2, 1920, in an editorial article, ‘La Correspondencia de España’ connected Poland’s territorial ambitions in the East with the Entente’s views on its preferred Polish eastern border. The newspaper’s editors argued that an “immediate armistice” would be the best way for justice to be applied, and the best way to ensure the Western allies’ support. The editors also argued the Western allies were against Poland’s Eastern territorial ambitions, which grew after the Polish military victories against the Bolsheviks. ‘La Correspondencia de España’ also explained that British newspapers were unsatisfied due to the failure of the Minsk negotiations until that time, and also due to the expected delay in reaching a peace agreement. However, according to ‘La Correspondencia de España’, British newspapers believed that both Poles and Bolsheviks would follow British

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<sup>1051</sup> *Ibidem*, 29.05.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1052</sup> “Los nuevos hombres. El Ataman Ukraniano Petlura I”, ‘ABC’, 17.07.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1053</sup> “Páginas de la guerra. El exterminio de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 12.08.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1054</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Una prueba de este apoyo será, si el hecho se confirma, que el Jefe de la Misión Militar francesa, General Henrys, se propone acompañar oficialmente y con su Estado Mayor al Jefe de la Nación polaca Mariscal Pilsudski cuya salida para el frente está anunciada para dentro de tres o cuatro días, fecha en que dará comienzo la contra-ofensiva bajo su mando, a que más arriba me refiero”.

indications, and that both sides would realize that the best for them was peace. To support its claim on the British views regarding Poland in the east<sup>1055</sup>, ‘La Correspondencia de España’ quoted the British newspaper ‘Westminster Gazette’ claiming that:

“such ambitions could lead Poland to irreparable disaster. The Allies have already given evidence of their desire to rebuild Poland with complete independence and with its own ethnographic borders, but these borders must be respected, not only by its neighbours, but by Poland itself. We cannot constantly guarantee their integrity as long as she continues to oppose our wishes, trying to extend her domain”<sup>1056</sup>.

Thus, it is clear that the British newspaper was against Poland having a negotiation policy based on territorial ambitions beyond the lands inhabited by Poles. However, it is difficult to determine if ‘La Correspondencia de España’'s editors completely agreed or not with the British newspaper's view, when they decided to insert this quote on the Spanish newspaper.

It is also worth explaining that on September 14, 1920 Casanova claimed that those who had believed that Britain seriously meant to threaten Soviet Russia to block it if it did not negotiate peace with Poland were “fools”. Casanova argued that the Bolsheviks' diplomatic attitude towards Poland was wicked. In order to justify such a statement, Casanova explained that the Polish delegates that went to Baranowice did not see the Soviet commissaires, allegedly due to a radiogram not having been received, and that later, after Lloyd George's pressure over its Bolshevik “hosts” to negotiate with Poland, when the Polish delegation went to Moscow to negotiate it came back “humiliated” because there it was told by the Soviet commissaires that “what needs to be dealt with is peace and not a conditional suspension of hostilities”<sup>1057</sup>. Casanova, because of seeing this challenging diplomatic situation in which Poland was left, claimed: “Treachery, farce, disgusting manipulation by the English politicians allowing the invasion of Poland, is what is offered to this poor nation in the international market”. Casanova compared the reprehensible British attitude towards Poland with the help that Poland received

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<sup>1055</sup> “Informaciones del extranjero. Compás de espera”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 2.09.1920, p. 2.

<sup>1056</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Tales ambiciones podrían llevar a Polonia a un desastre irreparable. Los aliados han dado pruebas ya de su deseo de reconstruir a Polonia con una independencia completa y con sus propias fronteras etnográficas; más estas fronteras han de ser respetadas, no solo por sus vecinos, sino por la misma Polonia. Nosotros no podemos garantizar constantemente su integridad mientras ella siga oponiéndose a nuestros deseos, tratando de extender su dominio”.

<sup>1057</sup> “ABC en Polonia. Los bolcheviques IV”, ‘ABC’, 14.09.1920, p. 5.

from France, highlighting Weygand's role to defend Warsaw<sup>1058</sup>. In relation to Casanova's opinion on Weygand's contribution to Polish victory in the Battle of Warsaw, González Caizán and Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski explain that: "during a certain period of time, she thought, because of following French and Endecja's propaganda, that the true winner of the Battle of Warsaw was gen. Maxime Weygand, but later she denied this information"<sup>1059</sup>.

Last but not least, when it comes to Spanish views on the Western Powers' role in the conflict, it must be highlighted that before the peak of the conflict, in February 1920 (in an article published on March 31) Casanova had claimed that those who were in favour of accepting the Bolshevik proposal were right, because "given the Entente's attitude, Poland at the gates of Russia and Germany, cannot sustain a war without the aid of its allies"<sup>1060</sup>. This comment must be understood as Casanova's criticism of the Entente for not supporting Poland enough, militarily speaking. Norman Davies's general interpretation of the Entente's support to Poland in the Polish-Soviet War is very similar to Sofía Casanova's interpretation in February 1920. In fact, Norman Davies argues that "the real state of the relations between Poland and the Entente in the period of the Polish-Bolshevik War is still wrongly assessed by historians, who use above all logics"<sup>1061</sup>, and in relation to this, Davies adds that "contrary to stubbornly repeated opinions, the Entente did not play the role of Poland's protector: The Entente by no means supported Poland, neither politically nor morally, nor - on a large scale - materially. In the war phase up to July 1920, Entente's policy was not one of neutrality, but of official désintéressement[...]"<sup>1062</sup>. Davies clarifies that:

"the volume of French military aid to Poland was tailored for defensive purposes only. In the period from August 1920 onwards, the Entente continually and consistently expressed its disapproval of Piłsudski, the Polish government and Polish

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<sup>1058</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1059</sup> C. González Caizán, J. Stanisław Ciechanowski, *Wojna polsko-rosyjska z lat 1919-1920 w korespondencjach Sofii Casanovy dla madryckiego dziennika „ABC”*, *op. cit.*, p. 33. Original quoted text: „Przez pewien czas myślała, w ślad za propagandą francuską i endecką, że prawdziwym zwycięzcą Bitwy Warszawskiej był gen. Maxime Weygand, ale później zdementowała tę informację”.

<sup>1060</sup> "El fracaso de Europa IV", 'ABC', 31.03.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1061</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały. Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 249. Original quoted text: "Rzeczywisty stan stosunków między Polska a Ententa w okresie wojny polsko-bolszewickiej jest nadal oceniany błędnie przez historyków, którzy posługują się przede wszystkim logikę”.

<sup>1062</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 249. Original quoted text: "Wbrew uparcie powtarzanym opiniom Ententa nie odegrała roli protektora Polski: Ententa bynajmniej nie wspierała Polski ani politycznie, ani moralnie, ani też-na wielka skale-materialnie. W fazie wojny do lipca 1920 polityka Ententy była polityką neutralności, lecz oficjalnego désintéressement[...]" .

aspirations - so much so that it attempted to remove the head of government, challenge the government and hamper aspirations”<sup>1063</sup>.

In other words, Davies downplays France’s military support of Poland against Soviet Russia and claims the Entente did not have a positive image of Piłsudski’s Poland.

On a final note regarding this question, one must also reveal that no references are found in the examined Spanish primary sources to the Western Powers’ reactions to the Treaty of Riga’ signature. In regard to the Entente’s reception of the treaty, Chwalba explains that “the allied countries received the treaty with mixed feelings. Paris and London acidly commented the Riga negotiations and the treaty”<sup>1064</sup>.

### **Poland’s Eastern policy**

In the Spanish press only Sofía Casanova, and one occasion Ramiro de Maeztu, analysed Poland’s eastern policy in the context of the Polish-Soviet War. Spain’s diplomatic representative in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera also handled this question with many details and a deep level of analysis in his correspondence to Spain’s state minister.

Whereas Casanova criticised the Polish offensive in Ukraine in one of her articles<sup>1065</sup>, on another, around a month later, despite seeing the Polish offensive in Ukraine as a mistake, she supported the idea of fighting for Poland’s eastern borders in the east against Russia, with the intention of keeping the Bolsheviks away from lands that were regarded by these as Polish, including Lithuania and Volhynia, and even “going beyond the ethnographic borders”. The Spanish writer claimed that the Polish intention to fight in the east itself was not a problem but the bad preparation and execution of this fight, from a military point of view, was indeed a problem<sup>1066</sup>. It can be interpreted that Casanova expected Poland being able keep its independent political existence and core territories, although she was not sure if Poland would be able to maintain gained eastern territories in the Kresy that would be in dispute with the

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<sup>1063</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 249. Original quoted text: „wielkość francuskiej pomocy militarnej dla Polski była dostosowana jedynie do celów defensywnych. W okresie od sierpnia 1920 roku Ententa dawała nieustannie i konsekwentnie wyraz swojej dezaprobaty wobec Piłsudskiego, rządu polskiego i polskich aspiracji-do tego stopnia, że próbowała usunąć Naczelnika, zakwestionować rząd i storpedować aspiracje”.

<sup>1064</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo. Wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 294. Original quoted text: „Państwa alianckie przyjęły traktat z mieszanymi uczuciami. Paryż i Londyn kwaśno komentowały rokowania ryskie i traktat”.

<sup>1065</sup> “Los nuevos hombres. El Ataman Ukraniano Petlura I”, ‘ABC’, 17.07.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1066</sup> “ABC en Polonia. Fe en la defensa I”, ‘ABC’, 14.08.1920, p. 3.



Bolsheviks. In relation to this, Casanova explained to her readers that the Polish expansionist Eastern policy was conceived in order to consolidate Polish “national power” based on historical factors. In addition, she argued that probably those conceiving this policy, which involved fighting in the East, probably did the right thing “since by means of blood nationalities affirm themselves and the territorial possession of states is ensured”<sup>1067</sup>.

In regard to a possible relation between imperialist attitudes and Poland’s Eastern Policy, it must be explained that whereas Spanish top diplomat in Warsaw Agüera argued that both socialist and national democrats “do not want that Poland seems an imperialist nation that compromises its independence because of conquering the independence of other countries”<sup>1068</sup>, ‘La Correspondencia de España’ s contributor and correspondent in London Ramiro de Maeztu claimed that Poland wanted to create an Empire that was made up of its neighbouring nations<sup>1069</sup>. So, in a way, Maeztu claimed Poland intended to do what Agüera said Poland would avoid to do, but it can be interpreted that Agüera meant Polish leaders would avoid a policy of annexation, whereas Maeztu also considered federation as a possibility within Poland’s intention to create an empire made of other nations.

### **Poland’s Internal affairs in the context of the Polish-Soviet War**

On many occasions, Spain’s diplomatic representative in Poland referred to Polish internal political affairs in connection with the Polish-Soviet War. The same can be said about Sofía Casanova, although she referred to these internal Polish affairs less often than Agüera.

A big focus in Casanova’s and Agüera’s comments on internal affairs related to the war is found on the different stands in Polish politics regarding accepting or not the Soviets’ proposal of a peace negotiation. For instance, in a text written in February 1920 but published on March 31, Sofía Casanova explained that in the Polish Sejm there was a division of opinions regarding whether to accept or discard Soviet Russia’s offer. The Spanish writer reported that the question was being “discussed” and would be solved in the next parliamentary gatherings. Casanova claimed that those who were in favour of accepting the Bolshevik proposal were

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<sup>1067</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1068</sup> AHN, H1681, 30.04.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1069</sup> “Después del trance. Pan-Polonismo”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 4.09.1920, p. 1.

right<sup>1070</sup>. From his side, on April 13 Agüera reported that the Polish socialists also complained about the fact that the peace negotiations could already break because of the place to hold them. As the Spanish diplomat explained, the Polish government demanded Borysov as the negotiations venue, while the Soviets offered different cities in Europe. Agüera claimed that the Polish Left accused the government of not wanting to concede anything to the Soviets, what led those to approach the Entente. The Spanish diplomat added that, according to the Polish socialists, Bolsheviks very skilful in taking advantage of the Entente. In relation to this, Agüera also explained that the Polish socialists, on their organ 'Robotnik' asked the Polish government to "find a solution that brings peace"<sup>1071</sup>.

Agüera also analysed the attitude in the Polish right wing parties regarding the negotiations with the Soviets and claimed that their point of view was completely different than on the Left concerning this question<sup>1072</sup>. In relation to this, Chwalba explains that "the socialists and the populists showed themselves seriously interested in Moscow's peace offer and the leftist work unions linked with PPS [Polish Socialist Party] threatened with a general strike, if peace negotiations with the Bolsheviks would not start"<sup>1073</sup>. This author also explains that "nationalists" did not reject the Russian peace offer because they believed that, if accepted by Poland, this would change Piłsudski's plans to create a military alliance with the Ukrainian Peoples' Republic led by Petlura, which the "nationalists" opposed<sup>1074</sup>.

In regard to this question, Casanova claimed the Polish government should prioritize ensuring stability and food to Poles above other ambitions<sup>1075</sup>. Therefore, she was in favour of Poland accepting the Bolshevik offer instead of continuing the war, so it can be argued that in this case she aligned with socialists, populists and national democrats against the view of the head of state, Piłsudski, on Poland's strategy in the conflict.

In late April 1920 Agüera believed that "now is when Poland starts to develop a completely independent policy in the peace question or on the question of the war with Soviet

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<sup>1070</sup> "El fracaso de Europa IV", 'ABC', 31.03.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1071</sup> AHN, H1681, 13.04.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1072</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1073</sup> Chwalba, A., *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polska-bolszewicka 1918-1920, op. cit.*, p. 162. Original quoted text: "Pokojołą ofertą Moskwy okazali się poważnie zainteresowani socjaliści i ludowcy a lewicowe związki zawodowe związane z PPS groziły strajkiem generalnym, jeśli nie rozpoczną się pokojowe rozmowy z bolszewikami".

<sup>1074</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 163.

<sup>1075</sup> "El fracaso de Europa IV", 'ABC', 31.03.1920, p. 3.

Russia. Polish right wing politicians, Agüera argued, were convinced Poland was until then dependent on the Entente and the Versailles treaty, and now despite keeping good relations with the Entente, Poland should no longer obey orders from it and should set its relation to France and Great Britain as relations between equal partners, at the same level. Agüera regarded Soviet government's move, which placed Poland in "a very difficult situation" also in front of the Entente, as very skilful. In the Spanish diplomat's view, Poland, despite the growth of its army, and against the right wing's belief, was unable to continue the war against the Bolsheviks on her own "because it needs to be supplied by the allied countries with war and railway material"<sup>1076</sup>. Also in late April, Spain's minister in Warsaw also reported to State Minister that Poland's foreign policy had been discussed in the latest sessions of the Sejm. The Spanish diplomat highlighted that member of parliament Ryszard Wojdaliński [a national democrat] accused foreign minister Patek of not having made the Entente understand that the establishment of trade relations between Western Powers and Soviet Russia was dangerous for Poland. Wojdaliński, as Agüera reported, also accused minister Patek of not having paid attention to Britain, what could have neutralized "Lloyd George's hostile policy towards Poland"<sup>1077</sup>. Agüera interpreted that Patek was in a "difficult" situation because of what the Spanish diplomat regarded as "a complete failure" of the peace negotiations involving Latvia, Finland and Romania. Both the socialists and the opposition national democrats, despite wanting peace with the Soviets, were all against Patek's foreign policy, Agüera argued. The Spanish diplomat explained that these politicians were against the requirements presented to Soviet Russia for peace and the underground negotiations with Petlura for the recognition of an independent Ukraine". Agüera also stated that Patek's policy was actually Piłsudski's policy and national democrats' accusations on Patek were actually headed to the Head of State. The Spanish diplomat claimed that the national democrats did not forgive that Piłsudski had more and more power every day. However, Agüera believed that the national democrats had no chance to defeat Piłsudski politically, giving as an example the latest Sejm voting that supported the government. Nonetheless, Agüera added that maybe certain ministers would be sacked, including Patek, to satisfy the national democrats. The Spanish minister in the Polish capital claimed it was strange that Patek did not fulfil his duties as a minister and did not arrive in San Remo to meet the allied Supreme Council to introduce Poland's policy towards Soviet Russia to the Council, as the Polish minister said he would do. Agüera added: "It is said that now he is

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<sup>1076</sup> 30.04.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1077</sup> *Ibidem*.

in Paris to convince the allies about why it is important for Poland both to make an offensive attack, along with Ukraine, and to recognize Ukraine as an independent state”<sup>1078</sup>.

At the beginning of summer 1920, both Casanova and Agüera depicted Poland’s internal political situation in Poland as extremely negative. Whereas on June 18, 1920 Agüera reported to state minister that the internal political crisis still continued, that there was no government, and that the Sejm worked and took decisions concerning the war, such as discussing funding for the army<sup>1079</sup>, a few weeks later, on July 28, 1920, (in a text written also in July) Sofía Casanova related the military situation with the country’s internal political situation by means of the following comment: “the interior situation of the country is bad. Socialists, communists and the other parties complain against each other, as if they didn’t have the enemy at the doors of their home”<sup>1080</sup>. It is clear Sofía Casanova could not understand this internal political polarization in a situation of national emergency. What is more, on her article published on August 24, Casanova claimed that in case “Piłsudski capitulated” and Warsaw fell in Bolshevik hands, a new Polish government would be created in Poznań and the Parliament would be moved there, what would cause “civil fight”<sup>1081</sup>.

Polish historian Janusz Szczepański explains that the change of tide in the military situation in favour of the Bolsheviks, which placed Poland “in a catastrophic situation”, led to “the fall of Leopold Skulki’s government” and a subsequent “government crisis”. The author adds that a first project of a concentration government was refused by the Left and then Witos’s attempt to create a new government also failed, what led Piłsudski to request Grabski the creation of the new Polish executive body, which materialized on June 23<sup>1082</sup>. According to Szczepański, the internal political crisis was solved with the creation of the National Defence Council<sup>1083</sup>,

“[...]in which were supposed to be seated the head of state as the director, the president of the ministers[...] the Marshall of the Legislative Sejm and 10 members of parliament indicated by the Legislative Sejm and ministers of: military affairs, internal

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<sup>1078</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1079</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.06.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1080</sup> “Perfiles del caos III”, ‘ABC’, 28.07.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1081</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1082</sup> J. Szczepański, *Władze i społeczeństwo Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej wobec bolszewickiego zagrożenia w 1920 roku, op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>1083</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 95-97.

affairs, foreign affairs, treasury, railways, supplies, former Prussian district, and five representatives of the Polish Army indicated every time by the Supreme Commander”<sup>1084</sup>.

About the National Defence Council, on August 3, 1920 Granzów de la Cerda, claimed that the creation of this institution was due to the fact the Bolshevik army “already threatened to attack the ethnographic borders of Poland, recognized by the Treaty of Versailles”. He added that the goal of the National Defence Council was to “safeguard the interests of the homeland and make the appropriate decisions, in matters related to both war and peace” and explained that the Council took “energetic measures to avoid a possible disaster”<sup>1085</sup>.

Two days later, on ‘La Correspondencia de España’ Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda explained that the National Defence Council government of Poland accepted harsh conditions and sent its approval to London because it wanted to be seen favourably by Britain and added that as soon as Britain had sent its proposal to the Soviets in Poland public opinion in Poland was “divided” into that matter. Some Poles were against peace negotiations due to the current military situation, while many more had had enough of wars, and supported the decision of the National Defence Council<sup>1086</sup>.

Another focus in comments about internal Polish politics was the head of state. On August 31, 1920, regarding Piłsudski’s status, Agüera argued the following:

“even though the popularity and prestige of the head of state have fallen considerably, and even though many are those who would like him abandoning his high position, no one dares to remove him because of not knowing or having at disposal anyone skilful enough to replace him”<sup>1087</sup>.

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<sup>1084</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 97-98. Original quoted text: “W Radzie mieli zasiadać: Naczelnik Państwa jako przewodniczący, Prezydent Ministrów jako przewodniczący w zastępstwie Naczelnika Państwa, marszałek Sejmu Ustawodawczego, dziesięciu posłów wyznaczonych przez Sejm Ustawodawczy, ministrowie: spraw wojskowych, spraw wewnętrznych, spraw zagranicznych, skarbu, kolej żelaznych, aprowizacji, byłej dzielnicy pruskiej, oraz pięciu przedstawicieli Wojska Polskiego wyznaczanych każdorazowo przez Naczelnego Wodza”.

<sup>1085</sup> “Desde Polonia. Ante la amenaza bolchevista. De nuestro redactor especial I”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 3.08.1920, p. 1.

<sup>1086</sup> “Desde Polonia. Spa, Londres, Moscou y Varsovia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 5.08.1920, p. 1.

<sup>1087</sup> AHN, H1681, 31.08.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor). Original quoted text: “Aunque la popularidad y prestigio del jefe del estado han decaído considerablemente, y aunque son muchos los que desearían verle abandonar el alto puesto que ocupa, nadie se atreve a hacerlo por no saber. y en realidad no poseer, quien siendo suficientemente hábil, pueda sustituirlo”.

Agüera claimed that a French intervention in Poland, in his view, would cause “Poland’s salvation, because until now it is proved that, [Poland] is unable to govern herself on her own”<sup>1088</sup>. It is unavoidable here to highlight that Agüera’s claim about Poland not being able to govern itself, used by Agüera, is one of the mottos historically used by Poland’s partitioners and occupiers to justify their actions. Moreover, it is worth commenting that in his comment it is seen that Agüera conveyed the idea of France saving a failed Poland.

On to another aspect within the internal politics topics, it is worth mentioning that Agüera also related Poland’s internal political differences with Poland’s eastern policy. He reported that the Polish socialists claimed their federal program was “brave” and “full of dignity”, but the Spanish diplomat was convinced that Polish diplomacy would not be able to keep these principles in its policy, because these opposed the political program of “the pro-annexation democratic party” [in reference to Endecja, because of the “incorporative” view advocated by the national democrats]. Spain’s minister in Warsaw saw this as the root of the eastern policy problem<sup>1089</sup>. Agüera saw Endecja as an obstacle to the socialists’ federal view. It is risky to make a hypothesis in relation to Agüera’s opinion on federation vs. incorporation, but one could interpret Agüera’s comment as a certain legitimization of the federal view.

In his diplomatic reports, Agüera also paid a lot of attention to the work of Poland’s Foreign Minister, first Patek and later Sapieha. For instance, as already mentioned, on April 30, 1920 Agüera stated that Patek was in a “difficult” situation<sup>1090</sup>. It must be highlighted that earlier, in December 1919 Spain’s ambassador in Paris Quiñones de León had commented on Patek’s nomination as foreign minister. Namely, in a telegram to Spain’s state minister sent on December 22, 1919, Spain’s ambassador in France claimed that Patek was Georges Clemenceau’s friend and that his appointment was agreed with France and England<sup>1091</sup>. The Spanish ambassador claimed that Patek’s appointment:

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<sup>1088</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1089</sup> *Ibidem*, 13.04.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1090</sup> *Ibidem*, 30.04.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Guierrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1091</sup> AHN, H2605, 22.12.1919, Spain’s ambassador in Paris Quiñones de León to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

“for now guarantees Poland’s tight union with England and particularly France and moderates the activity with which this country [Poland] works to equal its influence and even to outdo that [influence] of those powers [France and England]”<sup>1092</sup>.

So, one can interpret that Patek’s appointment, in Quinones view, should be positive for Poland, in terms of Entente’s support, also in relation to the war with Bolshevik Russia. Polish historian Małgorzata Gmurczyk-Wrońska precisely explains that Patek was an expert on France’s and England’s foreign policy<sup>1093</sup> and adds that “his [Patek’s] beginnings in the position of foreign affairs minister coincided with personal changes in France’s political life and [changes] in the [Western] Powers policy towards Bolshevik Russia”. The Polish historian refers to the change from the anti-Bolshevik *cordon sanitaire* policy advocated by Clemenceau in 1919 [Clemenceau was replaced by Alexandre Millerand as France’s prime minister on January 20, 1920] to the Entente’s diplomatic rapprochement to the Bolsheviks in early 1920<sup>1094</sup>.

In regard to the comments made by Spanish diplomatic representative in Warsaw on foreign minister Prince Sapieha, it must be highlighted, firstly, that on July 4, 1920 Agüera claimed that it would be very good for Poland that Sapieha stayed longer as foreign minister because of his personal skills, and more importantly, because of the trust he had gained among members of the British government and because of his great knowledge about the British government’s ideas on Polish affairs. Agüera argued that Sapieha advocated an “honourous” (dignified) peace agreement with the Soviets, and Agüera expected Sapieha to propose peace to the Bolsheviks as soon as there would be a good occasion for this<sup>1095</sup>. Secondly, on March 8, 1921 Agüera argued that Polish public opinion was negatively oriented towards the foreign minister Sapieha after his trips to London and Paris and Agüera thought this would not change after his trip to Bucarest. Agüera even predicted that Sapieha could resign from his Foreign Minister position soon because he lacked support from the Sejm<sup>1096</sup>.

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<sup>1092</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “[...]garantiza por ahora la estrecha unión de Polonia con Inglaterra y Francia particularmente y modera la actividad con que trabaja este país por igualar su influencia a la de aquellas potencias y hasta por superarlas”.

<sup>1093</sup> M. Gmurczyk-Wrońska, *Stanisław Patek w dyplomacji i polityce (1914-1939)*, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>1094</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 71. Original quoted words: „jego początki na stanowisko ministra spraw zagranicznych zbiegły się zarówno ze zmianami personalnymi w życiu politycznym Francji, jak i w polityce mocarstw wobec Rosji bolszewickiej”.

<sup>1095</sup> AHN, H1681, 4.07.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1096</sup> *Ibidem*, 8.03.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

Therefore, one can see that the Spanish diplomat had a very positive opinion of the Polish foreign minister in July 1920 whereas on March 8, 1921 Agüera basically reported that Sapieha was strongly criticized in Poland. However, in his March 8, 1921 report Agüera did not openly or explicitly criticize Sapieha, so it is possible that the Spanish diplomat still assessed the work done by the incumbent Polish Foreign Minister positively, as it was the case back in July 1920.

### **The Polish alliance with Petlura's Ukraine**

Both Sofía Casanova and Gutiérrez de Agüera dedicated a lot of attention to the alliance between Poland and Petlura's People's Ukrainian Republic. However, even more attention to this question is seen in the case of the Spanish press correspondent, who also wrote a lot more about Petlura himself, and even had the chance to interview him in person in Warsaw.

On an article published on July 17, 1920, but written in June, the Spanish correspondent argued that “the goal of the campaign” in Ukraine was to consolidate good relations with Ukrainians and “assure” Poland's eastern borders. Casanova also explained that she met Petlura in the Ukrainian legation in Warsaw. She also mentioned that she had been told [she didn't specify by whom] that Petlura ordered many executions of Russian army men and ordered his soldiers to kill the Polish defenders of Lwów in late 1918<sup>1097</sup>.

However, what is here most relevant is, that on an article published on the next day, July 18, Sofía Casanova described her encounter with Petlura. She quoted Petlura saying that “we have been regarded as Bolsheviks during the fights and alternatives of the war, and there isn't a bigger mistake than that”<sup>1098</sup>. Casanova also quoted the Ukrainian leader saying that they, Ukrainians, were in favour of “private property” and “individual freedom”, and also that “the system of common property that once the inhabitants of the left part of Ukraine rehearsed, fights with the nature of the Ukrainian nation, who fights against such system”<sup>1099</sup>. In addition, Casanova also quoted the Ukrainian leader describing the territorial extension of what he regarded as Ukraine:

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<sup>1097</sup> “Los nuevos hombres. El ataman ucraniano Petlura I”, ‘ABC’, 17.07.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1098</sup> “Los nuevos hombres. El ataman ucraniano Petlura II”, ‘ABC’, 18.07.1920, p. 5.

<sup>1099</sup> *Ibidem*.



“Our northern border goes through the Russian provinces of Kursk and Voronesche, the eastern one reaches in the south to Nowotscherkask, province of the Don-region Kozaks. The Ukrainian territory is united to the Caucas by the districts of Rostow and Traganrog. The half island of Crimea, to the south of Tauride, indicates the main border line of Ukraine towards the West and in Bessarabia our territory gets in touch with Romania [...] we are a nation geographically privileged. We touch the Caspian sea, we dominate the black sea, Odessa is ours”<sup>1100</sup>.

In addition, after highlighting the big extension of the country and its huge agriculture potential, Petlura explained to the Spanish writer that the Ukrainian nation was not well-known in Europe, because of having been part of Russia and Austria, and not being an independent state. In his conversation with Casanova, Petlura also highlighted that:

“in the past, my motherland made the biggest sacrifices to defend Europe from Mongols, Turks and Tartars and before the kingdoms of Poland and Russia got created, we already had the Kiev state, founded by the tribes of Eastern slaves”<sup>1101</sup>.

In addition, on the part of the interview to the Ukrainian leader published on July 20, (the third part of Casanova’s text about Petlura), we read that he told Casanova that:

“Ukraine and Poland in agreement will form a core of approximately 70 million. Romania will ally to them, and the south Cossacks, the Crimea tartars and some Caucasian republics will join us. Russia, the old rotten Russia, never will dominate us again and today, among the liberated nations, the covenants of mutual co-living and the federation in the most autonomous and nationalist sense of each country impose themselves [...]”<sup>1102</sup>.

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<sup>1100</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Nuestra frontera septentrional atraviesa las provincias rusas de Kursk y Voronesche; la oriental llega por el Sur hasta Nowotscherkask, provincia de los cosacos del Don. El territorio ucraniano hállase unido al Cáucaso por los distritos de Rostow y Traganrog. La semi-isla de Crimea, al Sur de Tauride, marca la línea frontera principal de Ucrania hacia el Oeste, y en Besarabia, nuestro territorio entra en contacto con Rumanía [...] Somos un pueblo geográficamente privilegiado. Tocamos el mar Caspio, dominamos Mar Negro, Odessa es nuestra”.

<sup>1101</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “En el pasado, mi Patria hizo los mayores sacrificios para defender a Europa de mongoles, turcos y tártaros y antes de que se constituyeran los reinos de Polonia y Rusia ya teníamos el Estado de Kiev, fundado por las tribus de eslavos orientales”.

<sup>1102</sup> “Los nuevos hombres. El ataman ucraniano Petlura III”, ‘ABC’, 20.07.1920, p. 5. Original quoted text: “Ukrania y Polonia, de acuerdo, formarán un núcleo aproximadamente de 70 millones. Rumanía se aliará y los cosacos del sur, los tártaros de Crimea y algunas repúblicas caucasicas se unirán a nosotros. Rusia, la antigua podrida Rusia, ya no volverá a dominarnos, y hoy, entre los pueblos libertados, se imponen los convenios de mutua conveniencia y las federaciones en el sentido más autónomo y nacionalista de cada país [...]

Last but not least, it is also worth mentioning the fragment in which Petlura told Casanova that: “we have admirable soldiers, and we only lack weapons, which Poland will give to us, since it receives them from the Entente. We will defend the right of everyone and we can offer France, England and Poland all they need”<sup>1103</sup>.

On to another question, on July 4, 1920 Agüera argued that Poland’s creation of Petlura’s independent Ukraine made that, at that stage of the conflict in early summer 1920, the Bolsheviks recovered better from its failures and operated more on the basis of plans. In addition, in the view of the Spanish diplomat, Russians, even those not aligned with Bolshevism, due to the Polish creation of Petlura’s Ukraine, saw in Poland a nation fighting against Russia and wanting to disintegrate it, instead of seeing Poland as a nation fighting only against Bolshevism. In relation to this, it is worth highlighting that precisely Szczepański explains that:

“Soviet propaganda took advantage of the Polish offensive in Ukraine as a crowning evidence of Polish imperialism. For the Russian society in general the war with Poland became a national war, for which the Bolshevik government obtained support even from the side of a significant part of opponents of the Soviet power. Under the slogan of defence of the threatened unity and wholeness of Russia the government managed to mobilize enormous forces to strike against Poland”<sup>1104</sup>.

A similar view is held by Norman Davies, who claims that patriotism in Russia increased as a reaction to the Polish offensive in Ukraine. Russians became interested in the Polish-Soviet War and the Soviet war effort “obtained the support of many Russians, who until that moment, refused to collaborate with the Soviet government [...]”<sup>1105</sup>.

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<sup>1103</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Nosotros tenemos soldados admirables y sólo nos faltan armas, que nos dará Polonia, puesto que ellas las recibe de la Entente. Defenderemos el derecho de todos y podremos ofrecer a Francia, Inglaterra y Polonia cuanto necesitan”.

<sup>1104</sup> J. Szczepański, *Władze i społeczeństwo drugiej rzeczypospolitej wobec bolszewickiego zagrożenia w 1920 roku. op. cit.*, p. 487. Original quoted text: “Sowiecka propaganda wykorzystwała wyprawę kijowską jako koronny dowód polskiego „imperializmu”. Dla ogółu rosyjskiego społeczeństwa wojna z Polska stała się wojną narodową, dla której poparcie rząd bolszewicki uzyskał nawet ze strony znacznej części zdecydowanych przeciwników władzy sowieckiej. Pod hasłem obrony zagrożonej jedności i całości Rosji udało mu się zmobilizować ogromne siły do uderzenia na Polskę”.

<sup>1105</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920, op. cit.*, p. 135. Original quoted text: „[wojna] zyskała poparcie wielu Rosjan, którzy dotychczas odmawiali współpracy z rządem sowieckim”.

In regard to the Piłsudski-Petlura alliance, it is also worth mentioning that on November 20, 1920 Agüera explained that the Bolsheviks' representative in the peace negotiations Adolf Joffe complained about Poland helping Petlura in Ukraine (and also complained about helping general Stanisław Bułak-Bałachowicz in the Minsk area). As reported by the Spanish diplomat, Poland's delegate in the peace negotiations replied to Joffe that this accusation was "unfair" because since armistice day Poland resigned from any relation with the armies mentioned by Joffe and added that Poland disarmed White Russian troops in Polish territory<sup>1106</sup>. However, the truth is, as Chwalba explains, that "in a discreet way, Piłsudski supported Bułak-Bałachowicz and Petlura, exposing himself to attacks from Moscow, which threatened to break the agreed peace preliminaries. In fact, the Soviet authorities for some time suspended the peace negotiations due to the activity of the Polish army in favour of Petlura and Bułak-Bałachowicz"<sup>1107</sup>. On the other hand, Norman Davies explains that "despite the armistice Polish Supreme Command still supported its earlier allies. In the north the Belarus army of Bułak-Bałachowicz was supported"<sup>1108</sup>. Davies also refers to the Polish cooperation in with Boris Peremkyn's army, Petlura's army and with Piotr Wrangel's forces<sup>1109</sup>. Meanwhile, Szczepański argues that there were too many reasons in Ukraine to dislike Poles, what hampered local support to the Polish armies and to Petlura's armies allied with Poles. These reasons were connected to the recent conflict over Lwów and the previous conflicts between both nations, the author argues. So, as Szczepański explains, it was difficult that the Polish army could "mobilize it [Ukrainian society] for a common fight for independence"<sup>1110</sup>.

### **The interallied mission in Warsaw**

The interallied mission in Warsaw was another of the topics regarding the Polish-Bolshevik armed conflict that appear in the examined primary sources, although it must be

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<sup>1106</sup> AHN, H1681, 20.11.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1107</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, op. cit., p. 292. Original quoted text: "Piłsudski dyskretnie wspierał Bułak-Bałachowicza i Petlurę, narażając się na ataki Moskwy, która groziła zerwaniem preliminarium. Rzeczywiście władze sowieckie na jakiś czas zawiesiły rokowania pokojowe ze względu na aktywność Wojska Polskiego na rzecz Petlury i Bułak-Bałachowicza".

<sup>1108</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały. Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, op. cit., p. 263. Original quoted text: „pomimo rozejmu polskie Naczelne Dowództwo nadal wspierało swoich wcześniejszych sojuszników”.

<sup>1109</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1110</sup> J. Szczepański, *Władze i społeczeństwo drugiej Rzeczypospolitej wobec bolszewickiego zagrożenia w 1920 roku*, op. cit., p. 85. Original quoted words: „[...]zmobilizować je do wspólnej walki o niepodległość”.

explained that most of these mentions were related to the figure of the French general Maxime Weygand and his contribution on the Polish side to achieve military goals against Soviet Russia. It is worth explaining that on July 24, 1920 *via* telegram Agüera reported to Spain's State Minister that the mood in Poland's society and politics improved because the allies decided to send their French-British diplomatic-military mission to Poland and announced that they would help Poland if the Bolsheviks did not accept the armistice proposition<sup>1111</sup>.

In connection with this, Chwalba explains that the Western Allies sent an "interallied mission" to Poland, after the Spa Conference, as Lloyd George had decided, made up of Lord d'Abernon, Jean Jules Jusserand and general Weygand, "one of the best staff commanders in the allies". Chwalba adds that: "the allies counted on a take of control over Poland's military and foreign policies. They expected Weygand to become Poland's new chief of staff and maybe chief commander, because they critically assessed the command executed by Piłsudski"<sup>1112</sup>.

As Chwalba also accounts, Weygand obtained the position of adviser to the general chief of staff and the author describes the reception of the mission members in Poland as "cold"<sup>1113</sup>. Norman Davies explains, precisely, that one of the goals of the interallied mission was to "replace the current Polish government with people, who, in the biggest extent, would identify themselves with the allies' interest". According to the Polish-British historian, this is why the mission met Paderewski in Paris, and the latter proposed Dmowski as the new premier replacing Grabski, to the interallied mission. However, Davies also explains that when the mission arrived in Warsaw, its members changed their mind and stopped questioning Piłsudski<sup>1114</sup>.

What is also important to underline regarding the interallied mission, is that both Agüera on August 18 and 'La Epoca' on August 19 highlighted the positive effects of Weygand's work for the Polish armies, which paved the way for Poland's victory against the Bolsheviks<sup>1115</sup>. Specifically, on August 18, 1920 Agüera claimed that the Weygand plan, in his view, contributed to the predictions going on the direction of a Polish military success, but the

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<sup>1111</sup> AHN, H1681, 24.07.1920. Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1112</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 235. Original quoted text: „Alianci liczyli na przejęcie kontroli nad polską polityką wojskową i zagraniczną. Oczekiwali, że Weygand zostanie nowym szefem sztabu, a może i naczelnym wodzem, gdyż krytycznie oceniali dowodzenie w wykonaniu Piłsudskiego”.

<sup>1113</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 236.

<sup>1114</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

<sup>1115</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.08.1920, Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor); "Ecos del Día", 'La Época', 19.08.1920, p. 1.

Spanish diplomat went beyond this, and also claimed that the positive results of the Weygand plan would have consequences in the Minsk peace negotiations and would even influence “international politics towards Russia”<sup>1116</sup>. In addition, on August 19 ‘La Época’ claimed that Weygand’s work in the war was “causing the Red Army’s defeat”<sup>1117</sup>.

On top of this, on August 25 Agüera reported that “thanks to general Weygand’s initiative and the collaboration of French officers with the High Command, Poland is not in a situation to discuss such conditions”<sup>1118</sup>, in reference to the Bolshevik demands for peace presented to the Polish delegation in the Minsk conference<sup>1119</sup>. In addition, on August 31 Agüera added that Weygand received a homage in Warsaw before returning to France and highlighted his role, praised by Poles, to save Poland. The Spanish diplomat assured that Weygand’s work contributed to Poles being thankful to France<sup>1120</sup>. Furthermore, Agüera interpreted that France, taking advantage of its good image on Poland, would appoint in Poland a High Commissioner and a military man “with more prestige and authority than general Henrys [chief of the French mission in Poland]”, who, as Agüera pointed out, failed on his attempts, according to most of the Diplomatic Corps’ diplomats<sup>1121</sup>.

In regard to the relations between the interallied mission and the Polish political leaders, nothing relevant is found in the examined Spanish primary sources. However, it is worth accounting that, as it has already been mentioned, that, as Norman Davies explains, when the interallied mission arrived in Warsaw, its members:

“got convinced that Piłsudski’s position is stronger than ever, and the appearance of the coalition government led by Witos put an end to Dmowski’s ambitions. British ambassador sir Horace Rumbold warned them that every attempt to remove Piłsudski would generate a revolt. They didn’t have

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<sup>1116</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.08.1920. Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1117</sup> “Ecos del Día”, ‘La Época’, 19.08.1920, p. 1.

<sup>1118</sup> AHN, H1681, 25.08.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor). Original quoted words: “[...]gracias a la iniciativa del general Weygand y a la colaboración en el Alto Mando de los oficiales franceses, no se halla en la necesidad de discutir semejantes condiciones”.

<sup>1119</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda. Wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, op. cit., p. 256.

<sup>1120</sup> AHN, H1681, 31.08.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1121</sup> *Ibidem*.

any choice than leaving Polish politics in peace. From that moment they limit their role to the supervision of Polish peace propositions and to ensure Weygand's directive position in the Polish army"<sup>1122</sup>.

### **The Minsk peace negotiations**

Only one reference to the Minsk negotiations is found among the Spanish press primary sources: on October 11, 1920, 'El Heraldo de Madrid''s editors claimed that the negotiations in Riga were very different from the negotiations in Minsk, because back in Minsk Soviet Russians intended to: "impose the full demoralization of Poles, the delivery of most of [Poland's] arms and even intended to implement the Soviet regime by means of a workers' militia, an armed force at the service of Moscow that had to be referee and owner of the young [Polish] Republic"<sup>1123</sup>.

Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw referred to the Minsk negotiations a few times. The first time he mentioned them was on August 3, 1920, when Agüera reported to state minister that Bolshevik Army leaders asked Polish deputies and delegates to go to Minsk on August 4 in order to negotiate peace, but these delegates returned to the Polish capital. He also reported that Poland's foreign affairs minister was convinced that Bolsheviks were dishonest but Eustachy Sapieha was willing to check peace possibilities by sending delegates, but at the same time trying to protect them<sup>1124</sup>. Two days later, Agüera added that Sapieha sent a telegram to Moscow asking to receive the Bolsheviks' peace requirements, which in Agüera's interpretation, in case of being "unacceptable" would make that Poland was not going send a representative to Minsk<sup>1125</sup>.

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<sup>1122</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda. Wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, op. cit., p. 174. Original quoted text: "przekonali się, że pozycja Piłsudskiego jest silniejsza niż kiedykolwiek, a powstanie koalicyjnego rządu Witosza położyło kres ambicjom Dmowskiego. Ambasador brytyjski, sir Horace Rumbold, ostrzegł ich, że każda próba usunięcia Piłsudskiego wywoła rewoltę. Nie mieli więc innego wyboru, jak pozostawić polską politykę w spokoju. Od tej chwili ograniczyli swoje cele do nadzorowania polskich propozycji rozejmowych oraz do zapewnienia Weygandowi kierowniczego stanowiska w armii polskiej".

<sup>1123</sup> "La paz ruso-polaca y la situación europea", 'El Heraldo de Madrid', 11.10.1920, p.1. original quoted text: "[...] imponer la demoralización completa de los polacos, la entrega de la mayor parte de su armamento y hasta pretendía implantar el régimen soviético, mediante una milicia obrera, fuerza armada al servicio de Moscú, que habría de ser árbitra y dueña de la joven República".

<sup>1124</sup> AHN, H1681, 3.08.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1125</sup> *Ibidem*, 5.08.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister. Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

Two more days later, on August 7, Agüera reported that Poland's National Defence Council, along with the French British military mission decided, first decided to send Polish representatives to Minsk but then, taking into account what happened in Baranowicze, decided to send the Bolsheviks a telegram before sending the Polish delegates. In Agüera's view, Polish hopes should be placed in the Polish Army's effective defence of the country, and not on a Bolshevik response to a Polish telegram<sup>1126</sup>. It can be seen that Agüera was very pessimist about a negotiated agreement between the two belligerent parts at this stage of the war. This view was most likely strongly influenced by the views held in Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and conveyed by the ministry to the diplomatic corps in Warsaw. This makes even more sense when one sees that two and a half weeks later, on August 25, Agüera claimed that both Polish politicians and foreign diplomats in Poland were sceptical about the Minsk conference providing any resolution to the conflict<sup>1127</sup>.

In relation to the change, in Poland's favour, of the front situation during the Minsk negotiations, Norman Davies accounts that "the first plenary session [of the Minsk negotiations] took place on August 17, when the results of the battle [of Warsaw] were not yet known"<sup>1128</sup>. Additionally, Davies explains that:

"a radio operator of the Polish delegation[in Minsk] managed to take a fragment of a war communication issued from Warsaw. He found out that Tuchaczewski's armies, after the loss of hundreds of divisions and thousand prisoners of war, are in full retreat. In the following plenary session on August 23 Dąbski declared that the Soviet conditions cannot be taken, and further discussions are pointless"<sup>1129</sup>.

Davies also describes the tense atmosphere and difficult situation the Polish delegation members had to go through in Minsk, such as being locked up in their headquarters after a manifesto signed by Tuchachewski was published in the city, featuring accusations addressed

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<sup>1126</sup> *Ibidem*, 7.08.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1127</sup> *Ibidem*, 25.08.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1128</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały. Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 255 Original quoted text: "pierwsza sesja plenarna odbyła się 17 sierpnia, kiedy rezultaty bitwy nie były jeszcze znane".

<sup>1129</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 256-257. Original quoted text: "radiooperator delegacji polskiej zdołał odebrać fragment komunikatu wojennego nadanego z Warszawy. Dowiedział się, że wojska Tuchaczewskiego, po utracie setek dział i tysięcy jeńców, znajdują się w pełnym odwrocie. Na kolejnej sesji plenarnej 23 sierpnia Dąbski oświadczył, że warunki sowieckie są nie do przyjęcia, a dalsza dyskusja jest bezprzedmiotowa".

to the Polish delegation<sup>1130</sup>. Norman Davies explains that during the Minsk conference, on August 19:

“the leader of the Soviet delegation, K. Daniszewski presented the conditions of his government. [in this conditions] Chełm and the territories west of the Curzon Line were generously left to Poland, however the conditions regarding the internal organization of the Republic were hard. On the 4th point the Polish armed forces were reduced to 50000 soldiers and 10.000 personnel [...]”<sup>1131</sup>.

In addition, Norman Davies accounts that “the leader of the Polish delegation Dąbski asked for time to consider these conditions, because these points went beyond his instructions”<sup>1132</sup>. However, Davies explains that on August 25, 1920, “Daniszewski reminded Dąbski that “a lost operation isn’t yet a lost campaign and even a lost campaign isn’t yet a lost war”<sup>1133</sup>. This is very telling on the Bolsheviks not seeing themselves as defeated yet.

The Polish-Soviet War had not yet ended in late August 1920, but it can be claimed that Poland had saved the first match ball in the diplomatic front. In connection with this idea, Norman Davies explains that the result of the Minsk conference was the opposite of what it was supposed to be initially, that is to establish the terms of the Russian victory over Poland<sup>1134</sup>.

### **The Riga peace negotiations**

It can be stated that the last months of the Polish-Soviet War, from the Battle of Warsaw until the Treaty of Riga signature, had a bit less impact in the Spanish press than the previous months, because the military theatre lost significance and the conflict started gradually moving to the diplomatic front<sup>1135</sup>. However, a few Spanish press sources referring to the Minsk and

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<sup>1130</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 256.

<sup>1131</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 255-256. Original quoted text: „19 sierpnia przewodniczący delegacji sowieckiej, K. Daniszewski, przedstawił warunki swojego rządu. Polsce wspaniałomyślnie pozostawiano Chełm oraz całe terytorium na zachód od linii Curzona, natomiast warunki dotyczące organizacji wewnętrznej Rzeczypospolitej były surowe. W punkcie 4 ograniczono wielkość polskich sił zbrojnych do 50 tysięcy żołnierzy oraz 10 tysięcy personelu [...]”.

<sup>1132</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 256. Original quoted text: „Przewodniczący delegacji polskiej Dąbski poprosił o czas na rozważenie tych warunków, gdyż w przedstawionych powyżej punktach wykraczały one poza jego instrukcje”.

<sup>1133</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 257. Original quoted text: „Daniszewski przypomniał mi, że przegrana operacja nie jest jeszcze przegrana kampania, a nawet przegrana kampania nie jest jeszcze przegrana wojna”.

<sup>1134</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 255.

<sup>1135</sup> See: J.S. Ciechanowski, *Traktat ryski i granica polsko-sowiecka z perspektywy hiszpańskiej*, [in:] *Zwycięski pokój czy rozejm na pokolenie? Traktat ryski z perspektywy 100 lat*, red. Z. Girzyński, J. Kłaczek, Warszawa 2022, p. 221–235.



Riga peace conferences and the final treaty negotiation have been found. Most references in the Spanish press to the Riga negotiations appeared in September 1920 and in that month Spain's top diplomatic representative in Warsaw referred to them on a few occasions in his diplomatic correspondence to Spain's state minister.

Whereas on September 18 Agüera concluded that the Polish military advance eastwards would continue, unless a "quick and favourable peace" was agreed in Riga soon<sup>1136</sup>, two weeks earlier, on September 2 'La Correspondencia de España' had claimed that if there would not be an armistice soon, the conflict could only be resolved in the battlefield, and no longer diplomatically<sup>1137</sup>. Agüera did not mention when, in his view, this eastwards Polish advance would stop, or if, in his opinion, eventually a diplomatic solution to the war would be agreed<sup>1138</sup>.

It is also worth adding that on September 15, 1920 Agüera reported that the previous day a Polish delegation left for the peace conference in the Latvian capital, and he also explain that Polish military efforts were then focused on expelling the Bolsheviks from Eastern Galicia towards Pinsk and on controlling the former German line of occupation, which, the Spanish diplomat argued, would be claimed by Poland in the Riga Peace Conference [as the Polish-Soviet border]. He added, without precisising source or context, that forecasts about the Riga peace negotiations were "optimistic", simply because of tiredness of war on both sides would facilitate a peace agreement<sup>1139</sup>.

In regard to demands from both sides during the Riga negotiations, what was surprising for the Spanish newspaper 'La Correspondencia de España's editors, as it is read on the September 29 edition of the newspaper, was "the moderation" of the Russian side, because the Bolsheviks gave up on initially proposed requirements for peace such as "the demobilization of the Polish army and the usage of railways in Poland for the Russian traffic to Western Europe". 'La Correspondencia de España' argued that, precisely because of these renounces in the negotiation, there was mistrust towards the Bolsheviks and added that "the Bolsheviks do not declare themselves as defeated and however, they show themselves as compromising as if they wished peace with Poland soon". The editors argued that in case of having such a peace,

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<sup>1136</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.09.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1137</sup> "Informaciones del extranjero. Compás de espera", 'La Correspondencia de España', 2.09.1920, p. 2.

<sup>1138</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.09.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1139</sup> *Ibidem*, 15.09.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

the Soviets could “strengthen” their army with ammunition and other resources, but thinking, not about fighting with Poland again, but about their war against Wrangel’s forces, which was their main military goal at the moment, in order to keep the empire they inherited from Tsarist Russia. To support this claim, the newspaper’s editors argued that a winter war against Poland could make the Bolsheviks lose the power in Russia, and also that the “conciliating spirit” of Bolshevik delegates in Riga was only due to this strategy of reaching a peace agreement with Poland in order to be in a comfortable situation to fight Wrangel’s armies. The editors of the evening conservative newspaper concluded that peace would be agreed soon and Poland would not hamper it, because European powers, despite distrust towards Soviet Russia, wanted this war to be over, since it threatened to become the beginning of a global European war, again. ‘La Correspondencia de España’s text concluded it would be good if Russians would fight against each other but would not bring these conflicts outside Russia<sup>1140</sup>. This is an example of placing the Polish-Soviet War within the context of the Russian “internal” wars.

### **The October 1920 Armistice and Peace Preliminaries**

In his reports for Spain’s state minister, Agüera paid a lot of attention to the October 12, 1920 agreed armistice and peace preliminaries, but in the Spanish press very few comments are seen on these. Norman Davies argues that the preliminaries were received positively by the Soviet direction in Moscow because, thanks to these, “the threat of a winter campaign, which the Red Army would not be in situation to conduct, was deleted”<sup>1141</sup>. A similar idea about the importance of peace with Poland for the Soviets in order to avoid a new winter campaign was expressed on ‘La Correspondencia de España’s, on September 29, as already mentioned above.<sup>1142</sup> In addition, a few days later, on October 7, the same newspaper, ‘La Correspondencia de España’ added that an information from London indicated that “probably hunger and chaos will invade Russia next winter unless the war with Poland ends immediately”<sup>1143</sup>. Four days later, on October 11, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’ claimed that the Bolsheviks were not in a situation to conduct a winter military campaign against Poland, due to Wrangel’s army progress, which they could halt by means of reaching a peace with Poland.

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<sup>1140</sup> “Informaciones del extranjero. La paz en Oriente”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.09.1920, p. 2.

<sup>1141</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, op. cit., p. 260. Original quoted words: „Groźba kampanii zimowej, której Armia Czerwona nie byłaby w stanie prowadzić, została usunięta”.

<sup>1142</sup> “Informaciones del extranjero. La paz en Oriente”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.09.1920, p. 2.

<sup>1143</sup> “La situación en Rusia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 7.10.1920, p. 2.

'El Heraldo de Madrid' argued that despite this, it was true that although Soviet Russia had agreed peace with Poland, the former could not have honest intentions towards the latter, and the Bolsheviks could try to attack Poland the following spring after defeating Wrangel's army. However, by then, as the Spanish newspaper explained, the international situation would be different than in August 1920, because Poland would probably be part of the alliance between Czechoslovakia, the Southern Slavs, Romania and Greece, under France's supervision [the so-called Small Entente, even though 'El Heraldo de Madrid' didn't use this naming]<sup>1144</sup>.

Earlier, on October 3, 1920, Agüera had reported that in Warsaw's political circles, it was believed that an armistice would be signed "within days", and that Polish Foreign Minister Sapeha told him that he was about to leave for Riga to sign a peace document. Agüera added that on September 28 Joffe delivered the peace preliminaries project, whose points were on most cases "unacceptable for Poland", in the Spanish diplomat's opinion<sup>1145</sup>. On October 7, Agüera's telegram was different than his letter sent on October 3 and brought good news: the delegates of Soviet Russia in the Riga negotiations accepted to give up on an Eastern Galicia plebiscite and on deciding about White Russian's future, and stated that despite not having an agreement on the border, on the following day, October 8, both parts would sign a preliminary peace agreement<sup>1146</sup>. As Chwalba explains, the armistice was in place since October 18 and the preliminaries agreed were ratified by the Polish side on October 22 while Russia ratified them on the 24th<sup>1147</sup>. From his side, Norman Davies explains that "the peace preliminaries were made of 17 articles, among which the first one was certainly more important than the rest". Davies clarifies that the first one was the treaty about the border, apart from highlighting the division of Belarus between both states. This author attributes the agreed borders to Grabski, an "incorporationist", although Davies explains that the established border could have even been more favourable to Poland<sup>1148</sup>. Moreover, Davies interprets the second article of the peace preliminaries about "not interfering in the internal affairs of the neighbour", including a reference to "respect of state sovereignty" as an unofficial mutual recognition "de facto and de jure"<sup>1149</sup>. Davies also explains that the armistice convention gave the instructions and the

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<sup>1144</sup> "La paz ruso-polaca y la situación europea", 'El Heraldo de Madrid', 11.10.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1145</sup> AHN, H1681, 3.10.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1146</sup> *Ibidem*, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1147</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920, op. cit.*, p. 290.

<sup>1148</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920, op. cit.*, p. 260-261.

<sup>1149</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 261.

calendar for the agreed ceasefire<sup>1150</sup>. The British-Polish historian also refers to “the economic agreement” reached in October 12, 1920 in the form of a “secret protocol”. Namely, Davies explains that:

“Poland was relieved of all responsibility resulting from participation in the economic life of the former Russian Empire, and at the same time entitled to participate in the reserves of the former tsarist State Bank. An advance payment in gold, natural resources and forest concessions was to be made on account of this participation, the amount of which, however, was not specified. Soviet Russia undertook to return all state movables, works of art, libraries, archives, trophies taken from Poland or confiscated there in the years 1772-1914, as well as industrial equipment and rolling stock that were confiscated in the years 1914-1918. Poland, in turn, committed to ensure the free transit of goods between the Soviet republics and Germany and Austria”<sup>1151</sup>.

### **Riga Treaty’s closure and signature**

Both Agüera and Casanova reported that the final negotiations in Riga were approaching the reality of a long expected Peace Treaty between the two belligerent countries. Casanova did not see the Riga Treaty as a solution to the Eastern European question. On an article published on December 10, 1920 but written in November 1920, she claimed that the treaty which was about to be signed regarded both nations as antithetical. In this sense, she understood that Russia would consolidate its “destructive” internal political system and also that “the deadly fight between the two Slavic nations will not end with the signatures of Riga”<sup>1152</sup>.

In regard to the content of the treaty itself, it is also very important to highlight that already on November 26, 1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw stated that the Bolsheviks’ stand on the approach to peace negotiations with Poland had changed after defeating Wrangel and Petlura, and this could make that in case finally the treaty was signed, it

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<sup>1150</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1151</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 262. Original quoted text: “Polska została zwolniona z wszelkiej odpowiedzialności wynikającej z udziału w życiu gospodarczym byłego Cesarstwa Rosyjskiego, jednocześnie uprawniona do udziału w rezerwach byłego carskiego Banku Państwowego. Na konto tego udziału miała być wypłacona zaliczka w złocie, surowcach naturalnych oraz koncesjach leśnych, której wysokości jednak nie określono. Rosja Sowiecka zobowiązywała się zwrócić wszystkie państwowe ruchomości, dzieła sztuki, biblioteki, archiwa, trofea wywiezione z Polski lub skonfiskowane tam w latach 1772-1914, a także urządzenia przemysłowe oraz tabor kolejowy, które zarekwirowano w latach 1914-1918. Polska z kolei zobowiązywała się zapewnić wolny tranzyt towarów między republikami sowieckimi a Niemcami i Austrią”.

<sup>1152</sup> “Intervalo de paz sin paz I”, ‘ABC’, 10.12.1920, p. 3.

would be way less favourable for Poland than the preliminary peace proposal<sup>1153</sup>. So, the question to be asked here is: was the preliminary peace proposal more favourable for Poland than the final treaty? The answer is probably “no”. In fact, almost four months after his prediction, on March 21, 1921 Agüera claimed that he could reveal to Spain’s state minister, without knowing the content of the treaty yet, that the established eastern Polish borders were very similar to those in the preliminary agreements, but “with small modifications favouring Poland”<sup>1154</sup>.

Previously, in January 1921 Agüera had reported that the Polish government looked at the calendar with optimism when it comes to the signature of the treaty and also that the announced Piłsudski’s visit to Paris changed the Soviet attitude in the negotiations, being the Bolsheviks more willing to make concessions to Poland<sup>1155</sup>. A few weeks later, on March 7, 1921 Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw sent another letter to state minister reporting about the status of the Polish-Bolshevik peace negotiations. After listing the points on which the writing commissions had reached agreements, Agüera claimed that the negotiations were entering its final phase, and this peace treaty was highly expected, not only by politicians but also by trade business circles in Poland. The diplomat added that “the signature of the treaty will allow Poland to deal, more calmly, with an infinity of interior problems that it has pending, such as the reconstruction of railways, bridges, and establishing new communication vias that will enable the relations between West and East and that will considerably favour Poland”. However, Agüera added that Russia’s situation was uncertain and that could affect the treaty’s completion, since there were news of “the Soviet government being really threatened”<sup>1156</sup>. In a way, it can be argued Agüera downplayed the value of the treaty, whereas Sofía Casanova didn’t see it as the right tool to solve the conflict between Poland and Soviet Russia.

## **Result of the war**

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<sup>1153</sup> AHN, H1681, 26.11.1920, Agüera to State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1154</sup> *Ibidem*, 21.03.1921, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez e Agüera to Spain’s State minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1155</sup> *Ibidem*, 22.01.1921, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1156</sup> *Ibidem*, 07.03.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

Clear references to the final result of the war based on a thorough analysis are not found in the examined Spanish press sources. From his side, Agüera focused on the final war result in relation with the upsides and downsides of the Treaty of Riga. On March 21, 1921 Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw interpreted that there wasn't much trust to the Treaty among politicians and diplomats in Poland, because there was uncertainty regarding the Soviet compliance with the treaty and there was uncertainty even about the duration of the Soviet regime in Russia, but yet it was perceived positively as "a base for future negotiations". Agüera added that: "there is a circulating rumour that Poland intends to bring the treaty to the League of Nations to register it, and this way, to have an additional warranty that it will be respected and strengthened, because this would mean its acknowledgement by the main European powers"<sup>1157</sup>. Moreover, Agüera reported that in Poland the treaty was expected to favour the Polish economy due to the opening of borders with Russia, which would benefit the Polish industry. As an example he added that:

"Łódź's factories already have in reserve large stocks of fabrics ready for export to Russia and if the government in Warsaw were to lift the import ban on a large number of manufactured articles, the benefits for this country would be incalculable because of transit between the west and the east becoming obligatory"<sup>1158</sup>.

When we look for such an ultimate analysis of the war result in scientific literature we see that Andrzej Chwalba claims that "although Piłsudski won the war, he lost the peace"<sup>1159</sup>. This scholar also claims that the Treaty of Riga did not consider either Piłsudski's or Dmowski's vision for the country's eastern lands<sup>1160</sup>. Meanwhile, Norman Davies concludes that due to conflict ending with the Treaty of Riga, there was no real victory of any of the sides and the war goals "were not achieved"<sup>1161</sup>. He explains that:

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<sup>1157</sup> *Ibidem*, 21.03.1921, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor). Original quoted text: "Circula también el rumor de que Polonia se propone llevar dicho Tratado a la liga de las Naciones para que sea registrado y con ello tener una garantía más de que será respetado y al mismo tiempo darle más fuerza puesto que ello supondría su reconocimiento por parte de las principales potencias europeas".

<sup>1158</sup> *Ibidem*, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor). "Las fábricas de Lodz tienen ya en reserva grandes stocks de tejidos preparados para la exportación a Rusia y si el gobierno de Varsovia levantara la prohibición de importación de una gran cantidad de artículos manufacturados, los beneficios para este país serían incalculables por ser el tránsito obligatorio entre el Occidente y el Oriente".

<sup>1159</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, op. cit., p. 297. Original quoted words: „choć Piłsudski wygrał wojnę, to przegrał pokój”.

<sup>1160</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 296.

<sup>1161</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, op. cit., p. 267.

“The Bolsheviks did not break out of the blockade, did not provoke the dreamed-of European revolution and did not succeed in saving Lit-Biel. The Poles neither established a Borderland Federation nor rebuilt a state from sea to sea, so the result of the Polish-Bolshevik War was not a compromise but a stalemate. There was no resolution”<sup>1162</sup>.

## **Piłsudski and the Polish-Soviet War**

It is worth describing Agüera’s, Casanova’s, Granzow’s and newspaper’s editors views regarding Piłsudski’s actions, decisions and political conceptions throughout the Polish-Soviet War and it is also worth comparing them with the views on Piłsudski held by historians in scientific literature.

To start with, it can be mentioned that whereas liberal pro-allied newspaper ‘El Sol’ saw Piłsudski as “the leader of the Polish socialists”<sup>1163</sup>, Agüera presented a very powerful Piłsudski in his diplomatic letters during the Polish-Soviet War, and explicitly referred to him as “the only boss of Poland”, highlighting that “other states always have to deal with Piłsudski” in regard to the Polish-Soviet conflict<sup>1164</sup>.

Polish historian Janusz Szczepański claims military decisions in the conflict with the Bolsheviks in the East were taken only by Piłsudski<sup>1165</sup>. Agüera reported a similar view. On April 30, 1920 the Spanish diplomat added other states always had to deal with Piłsudski to discuss the Soviet Russian issue<sup>1166</sup>. In addition, Agüera believed that no matter what Patek did or what was discussed in the Sejm, all these actions had a very limited real influence on the national politics because, above them, there was always the power of Piłsudski, who:

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<sup>1162</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Bolszewicy nie wyrwali się z blokady, nie sprowokowali wymarzonej rewolucji europejskiej i nie udało im się ocalić Lit-Bieła. Polacy ani nie ustanowili Federacji Kresowej, ani nie odbudowali państwa od morza do morza. Efektem wojny polsko-bolszewickiej nie był więc kompromis, ale impas. Rozwiązanie nie istniało”.

<sup>1163</sup> “Los momentos actuales. El bolchevismo español”, ‘El Sol’, 11.04.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1164</sup> AHN, H1681, 30.04.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw to Spain’s state minister.

<sup>1165</sup> J. Szczepański, *Władze i społeczeństwo Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej wobec bolszewickiego zagrożenia w 1920 roku, op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>1166</sup> AHN, H1681, 30.04.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

“in addition to the prestige and authority that he had already conquered, his recent military successes make him the only boss of Poland” and added other states always had to deal with Piłsudski to discuss the Soviet Russian issue and also any question concerning “balance in Central Europe”<sup>1167</sup>.

Therefore, it can be interpreted that Agüera highlighted the figure of Piłsudski as the main Polish leader, who was seen by other states as the person holding the real decision power in Poland in regard to the Polish-Soviet War. In relation to the Polish leader’s significant role in the conflict, Norman Davies claims that “Jozef Klemens Giniatowicz-Piłsudski was, without a doubt, the main figure of the Polish-Soviet War. His critics would say it [the war] was his private adventure”<sup>1168</sup>.

It is also important to remark that in more than one occasion during the Polish-Soviet War, Agüera referred to Piłsudski’s luck. For instance, on May 29, 1920 Agüera finished his report hoping that Piłsudski’s good luck until then would continue, because a Polish victory would be “a deadly strike” on Soviet Russia, while a Bolshevik victory would erase Polish independence, creating a “disaster” at a European level<sup>1169</sup>. However, only a few days later, on June 12, 1920, in a letter to Spain’s state minister, Agüera reported that Piłsudski’s characteristic good luck seemed to have finished due to his failures in the Berezina and in Ukraine.

It is seen across most relevant Spanish primary sources that Piłsudski was identified as a synonym of Poland in regard to the country’s struggle against Soviet Russia. Sofía Casanova’s articles on ‘ABC’ are no exception to this. In a text written in May 1920, but published on June 23, 1920, Sofía Casanova reported on her interview with Piłsudski, within the context of the Polish-Soviet War and on this interview the Marshall told Casanova, as she reported in her text, that “the destructive campaign of the Bolsheviks is atrocious. Today’s

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<sup>1167</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “además del prestigio y la autoridad que ya tenía conquistadas, sus recientes éxitos militares, le convierten hoy, en único amo de Polonia, con quien las demás naciones han de contar no solo para solucionar la cuestión rusa, sino también para todas aquellas que afectan al equilibrio de la Europa central”.

<sup>1168</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, op. cit., p. 59. Original quoted text: „Józef Klemens Giniatowicz-Piłsudski był bez wątpienia główną postacią wojny polsko-bolszewickiej. Jego krytycy powiedzieliby, że była jego prywatną awanturą”.

<sup>1169</sup> AHN, H1681, 29.05.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).



Russians are not men, they have degenerated. If Darwin studied them I think he would find their body very similar to the protoplasm monkey. They are not men”<sup>1170</sup>.

In response, Casanova asked the Polish Marshall:

“[SC] What will be Poland’s policy, as the peace negotiations are broken? The Red Republic does not yield to Poland’s conditions”<sup>1171</sup>.

And the conversation between the Spanish writer and the Piłsudski went on like this:

[JP replied:] [Soviet Russia] will have to accept them”

[SC: ]You oppose to Poland taking territories regarded as Russian by the reds”

[JP: ] We don’t have to ask them. Our borders have to give Poland a guarantee for the future. We don’t want other people’s property, but we will defend what is ours”<sup>1172</sup>.

One should wonder if Piłsudski’s response about his opposition to take territories regarded as Russian by the Soviets was completely sincere, since it could give room to certain contradictions with the actions related to the attempt to implement his federal view.

One of the most often highlighted aspects of Piłsudski’s personality in the context of the Polish-Soviet war in the examined Spanish sources was his humility. Casanova, emphasizing his humility described the Polish Head of State like this after meeting him in person: “This man, simple in his habits, rigidly military, who is neither dazzled by honours nor possessed by personal ambitions”<sup>1173</sup>. However, ‘El Imparcial’’s correspondent in Paris Manuel Ciges Aparicio saw this humility as something only apparent externally and claimed that under a modest appearance, Piłsudski was astute and extremely ambitious, as the Polish leader’s enemies pointed out<sup>1174</sup>. Piłsudski’s alleged humility can also be related to his alleged humanity. This was perceived by Agüera, who on March 26 1920 claimed that Piłsudski was

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<sup>1170</sup> “Los nuevos hombres. El Jefe del estado polaco IV”, ‘ABC’, 23.06.1920, p. 4. Original quoted text: “Es atroz la campaña destructora de los bolcheviques... los rusos de hoy no son hombres, han degenerado...Si Darwin los estudiara, creo que hallaría su cuerpo aproximadísimo al del mono protoplasma...no son hombres”.

<sup>1171</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “¿Cuál será la política de Polonia, rotas las negociaciones de paz? La República roja no cede a las condiciones de Polonia...”.

<sup>1172</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “—Tendrá que aceptarlas—Se opone a que Polonia tome territorios considerados rusos por los rojos.—No hemos de preguntarles. Nuestras fronteras han de dar a Polonia garantía del porvenir. No queremos lo ajeno, pero defenderemos lo nuestro”.

<sup>1173</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text “Este hombre, sencillo en sus costumbres, rígidamente militar, que ni está deslumbrado por los honores ni poseído por ambiciones personales”.

<sup>1174</sup> “Piłsudski en París. La Alianza entre Francia y Polonia”, ‘El Imparcial’, 9.02.1921, p. 1.

“more skilful and more human, maybe because of being himself a Lithuanian, than his ministers”<sup>1175</sup>.

In relation to this, it is also worth highlighting that on November 15, 1919 Agüera had used the adjectives “patriotic” and “democratic” when writing about Piłsudski<sup>1176</sup> and on March 16, 1921 Casanova claimed that “Marshall Piłsudski is a religious man, mystic, as was his country fellow Mickiewicz, and as I already said, I think that he keeps the secret of his patriotic plans”<sup>1177</sup>.

In addition, it must be highlighted that the views on Piłsudski held by Agüera, Casanova, and the other Spaniards writing about Poland during the researched period were not static. For instance, during the Battle of Warsaw, on August 13, 1920 Agüera saw a Piłsudski which had lost support in Polish society, but who would not be removed as head of state, a Piłsudski certainly not so powerful as weeks earlier<sup>1178</sup>.

It must be also noted that no direct references to the figure of Piłsudski in connection with the Polish-Soviet War have been found in Casimiro Granzów’s contributions to ‘La Correspondencia de España’.

### **The wars between Russian armies**

Many references and a lot of attention are seen in the checked Spanish primary sources to the wars between the Bolsheviks and other Russian armies. For instance, in September 1920 ‘La Correspondencia de España’ argued that the “conciliating spirit” of Bolshevik delegates in Riga was only due to this strategy of reaching a peace agreement with Poland, in order to be in a comfortable situation to fight Wrangel’s armies<sup>1179</sup>.

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<sup>1175</sup> AHN, H1681, 26.03.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor), original quoted words: “Más hábil y más humano-quizás por ser él mismo lituano-que sus ministros”.

<sup>1176</sup> *Ibidem*, 15.11.1919, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1177</sup> “ABC en Polonia. Triunfo y dudas”, ‘ABC’, 16.03.1921, p.3. Original quoted words: “El Mariscal Piłsudski es hombre religioso, místico, cuál lo fue su compatriota Mickiewicz y, como ya dije, creo que guarda el secreto de sus designios patrióticos”.

<sup>1178</sup> AHN, H1681, 13.08.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1179</sup> “Informaciones del extranjero. La paz en oriente”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.09.1920, p. 2.

It is also worth explaining that Agüera argued that some Polish politicians thought the same way he did regarding Poland's relation with Russia. By this he meant that Poland had to think about the need of a convenient friendliness with Russia when thinking about the future. According to the Spanish diplomat, a proof of this was the fact that "Boris Savarinkoff" [Savinkov] was in Warsaw. He was, according to Agüera, "a democratic Russian politician", who talked with the current Polish government about a potential mediation for a Soviet Russian-Polish relations improvement<sup>1180</sup>. Polish historian Andrzej Nowak explains that Savinkov was first contacted by Piłsudski in January 1920, and he was a "former terrorist in the anti-Tsar revolution movement, who from 1917 was one of the leading figures in anti-Bolshevik Russia"<sup>1181</sup>. Nowak adds that after many defeats of the White Russian movement that Savinkov supported, "he presented himself as the last active fight force against Soviet power in Russia". As Nowak clarifies, Savinkov was in charge of organizing "a new Russian political centre" that had as its goal the creation of a volunteer Russian army that would fight along Poland against the Bolshevik army<sup>1182</sup>.

However, the war against Poland also unified many different Russian forces around the Bolsheviks. As already mentioned, Norman Davies claims that patriotism in Russia increased as a reaction to the Polish offensive in Ukraine. As he explains, the war "obtained the support of many Russians, who until that moment, refused to collaborate with the Soviet government. Among them the most important character was Aleksiej Brusilov"<sup>1183</sup>.

Last but not least within this question, it is worth adding that on August 22, 1920 'El Liberal' claimed that "once the Russians will be free from the Polish nightmare" they would have to face Wrangel's troops in Crimea, which were supported by the "French general staff". The newspaper's editors stated that "all this about Poland and Russia, Russia and Wrangel, France and England already smells like a sick pout"<sup>1184</sup>. It can be interpreted as if 'El Liberal' mocked the complexity of the alliances created by the Entente with the goal of ending with the Bolsheviks as rulers of Russia.

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<sup>1180</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.06.1920 Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1181</sup> A. Nowak, *Kłęska imperium zła, rok 1920, op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>1182</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1183</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały. Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polska-bolszewicka 1919-1920, op. cit.*, p. 135. Original quoted text: „ [wojna] zyskała poparcie wielu Rosjan, którzy dotychczas odmawiali współpracy z rządem sowieckim. Wśród nich najważniejszą postacią był Aleksander Brusilow”.

<sup>1184</sup> "Londres. Hablemos de Rusia y de Irlanda", 'El Liberal', 22.08.1920, p. 1.

## Germany's role in the Polish-Soviet War

Germany's stand and interest in the Polish-Soviet War generated very few comments in the Spanish press but drew quite some attention in Spain's diplomacy. For instance, the existence of cooperation between Germany and Soviet Russia against Poland's sake was claimed by Agüera and in an indirect way by both 'Blanco y Negro's (ABC's weekly) contributor Ángel Castell and 'El Heraldo de Madrid's editors<sup>1185</sup>. Both Agüera at the time and Chwalba *a posteriori* claimed that Germany wanted Soviet Russia to defeat Poland in this conflict because this would end or modify, in Germany's best interest, the existing Versailles Treaty system<sup>1186</sup>. In addition, Chwalba claims that the Bolsheviks promised Germany that if they took Poland, they would give the latter the Polish lands that were part of the German Empire<sup>1187</sup>.

As Chwalba also did *a posteriori*<sup>1188</sup>, on 'ABC's weekly magazine Ángel Maria Castell mentioned the German obstruction of military resources shipments to Poland. Castell explained that the German socialists in the government, namely Simons, complained about the possibility of the Entente bringing weapons or men to Poland through Germany, arguing this was breaking Germany's neutrality and would go against international law. Castell criticised the German socialists' stand on this question by pointing out that this is exactly what Germany did in Luxemburg and Belgium during the Great War and back then German socialists did not complain<sup>1189</sup>.

However, in the context of the Polish offensive in Ukraine, Jędruszczak explains that:

“after the start of the Polish offensive, the Berlin government of chancellor Herman Muller announced neutrality of Germany in the question of the war between Poland and the Soviet Russian Republic. The pressure of the Entente and the anti-Soviet stand of German

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<sup>1185</sup> “La situación europea. Los temores de Francia”, 'El Heraldo de Madrid', 14. 08.1920, p. 1.; “Apuntes de la semana”, 'Blanco y Negro', 15.08.1920, p. 6.

<sup>1186</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920, op. cit.*, p.225; AHN, H1681, 21.08.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1187</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920, op. cit.*, p. 225.

<sup>1188</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1189</sup> “Apuntes de la semana”, 'Blanco y Negro', 15.08.1920, p. 6.

politicians made that then there wasn't a strict German-Soviet cooperation, what obviously was favourable for Poland"<sup>1190</sup>.

The potential or actual internment and disarmament of Bolshevik troops in Eastern Prussia due to the military situation is mentioned by Agüera on three diplomatic letters: these sent on August 21, August 25, and October 3 to Spain's state minister. On August 21, 1920 Agüera referred to the question of a Eastern Prussian rulers' potential reaction if the Bolshevik troops operating between the Vistula river and the northern Poland border with Eastern Prussia would be forced to cross that border due to the war situation with Poland. The Spanish diplomat argued that, in theory, these entering Bolshevik troops should be disarmed by the East Prussian Germans, as they had already done with Poles previously forced to cross the border. However, according to Agüera, in Poland there was concern about the possibility of German workers trying to stop the disarming of the Bolshevik troops, due to the "reigning effervescence", what in Agüera's opinion would "create a situation unbearable for Poland and the nations that have guaranteed her independence". Spain's minister in Warsaw added that Polish military successes against the Bolsheviks generated anger in Germany because Germans expected Poland to lose the war with Soviet Russia, so that, this way the Versailles treaty would be revised in Germany's favour<sup>1191</sup>. Four days later, on August 25, Agüera reported there was anxiety in Poland about how Germany would operate in relation to the Bolsheviks trying to enter Eastern Prussia since Germany had declared its neutrality in the Polish-Soviet War<sup>1192</sup>. A few weeks later, on October 3, 1920, Agüera forwarded to State Minister a letter written by the German commissaire of Eastern Prussia, Vigdor Kopp to the Soviets' diplomatic representative in Berlin, which, in Agüera's view, proved that there was "complicity" between Germany and Soviet Russia regarding the Polish-Soviet War. The document was given to him, Agüera reported, by an official at Polish Foreign Ministry who asked him to forward it to the Spanish government, as "an undeniable proof that Bolsheviks and Germans agree"<sup>1193</sup>. Agüera did not reveal the name of such Polish official. Agüera only and briefly mentioned that in the attached letter there were

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<sup>1190</sup> T. Jędruszczak, *Wyprawa kijowska i kontratak Armii Czerwonej*, *op. cit.*, p. 346. Original quoted text: "Po rozpoczęciu ofensywy polskiej berliński rząd kanclerza Hermanna Mullera ogłosił neutralność Niemiec w sprawie wojny między Polską a RSFRR. Nacisk Ententy i antyradziecko nastawionych polityków niemieckich sprawił, że nie doszło wówczas do ścisłego współdziałania niemiecko-radzieckiego, co oczywiście było z korzyścią dla Polski".

<sup>1191</sup> AHN, H1681, 21.08.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1192</sup> *Ibidem*, 25.08.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1193</sup> *Ibidem*, 3.10.1920. Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

references to Germany trying to transfer Bolshevik interned soldiers to the east “through the Polish corridor”, to train locomotives being sent to Russia and to passport falsification in East Prussia to send pro-Bolshevik citizens to Baltic countries, in order to spread pro-Soviet propaganda<sup>1194</sup>.

In addition, in relation to the same topic, on July 22, 1920, Spain’s *chargé d’affaires* in Germany Alfonso Fiscowich y Gullón sent an encrypted telegram to Spain’s state minister reporting that, according to the German press, the Soviet Russian armies were near Eastern Prussia, and also reporting that the Polish defeat against the Soviets would take place and would cause “France’s political defeat”. Fiscowich also communicated that Soviet Russia did not intend to invade Germany and wanted to restart German-Russian trade relations. The telegram added that, according to the German right wing, these Soviet movements were dangerous<sup>1195</sup>. By these movements we should probably interpret the Soviets’ intention to make their troops enter German territory, in Eastern Prussia. However, on August 14, 1920 ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’’s editors had argued that in Germany even conservatives, which in theory were opposed to Bolshevism, now supported Bolsheviks because these “defeated and dominated Poles, friends of France”<sup>1196</sup>, so, it can be claimed that, in a way, across examined Spanish primary sources there were some differences about the interpretations of the German right wing’s stand on the Bolsheviks and their war against Poland.

Therefore, one should ask the following question: according to the examined Spanish sources, what did Germans expect to be the result of this war? In what can be used as an answer to this question, Agüera argued that Polish military successes against the Bolsheviks generated anger in Germany, because Germans expected Poland to lose the war. On the other hand, French journalist in Spain Gaston Routier, in his August 13 1920 contribution to ‘ABC’, claimed that in Germany, the Bolshevik success in Poland “caused an intense impression”. Routier also quoted former German military leader and then politician Erich Ludendorff saying to the ‘Manchester Guardian’, among other things, that:

“Poles’ demoralization is so complete that neither the supply of ammunitions nor the support by new troops will be able to solve it. The impact in Germany will be fatal [...] France will be able to invade Western Germany, but it doesn’t have enough

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<sup>1194</sup> *Ibidem*, 25.08.1920. Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1195</sup> *Ibidem*, 22.07.1920. Spain’s *chargé d’affaires* in Berlin Alfonso Fiscowich y Gullón to Spain’s state minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1196</sup> “La situación europea. Los temores de Francia”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 14. 08.1920, p. 1.

strength for the giant venture of containing the colossal avalanche from the East and will not dare to remobilize. Sooner or later, Ludendorff predicted, Germany will be a prey of Bolshevism and its industrial capacity, its resources, its military science will fatally sum to the wealth in food resources, raw materials and human elements of its colossal neighbour, constituting a red unbeatable combination”<sup>1197</sup>.

Routier claimed that these words did not need any comment, what in this case can be interpreted as the French columnist agreeing with Ludendorff’s arguments.

## **Spain and Bolshevism**

Another topic that is worth exploring is the relation between Bolshevik ideas and Spain’s society, press and politics, as well as Spanish views on Bolshevism, overall, during the period of the Polish-Soviet War.

In their book about Spain’s history, Tadeusz Miłkowski and Paweł Machcewicz state that “a wave of revolutionary violence took Barcelona in the years 1917-1923” and also that “the striking movement and the revolutionary terrorism reached their apogee” during this period<sup>1198</sup>. In addition, Spanish historian Santos Juliá explains that after a “hard repression” by the Spanish army of a general strike organized in 1917 by the socialists, the Spanish king Alfonso XIII “more than restless, full of fear because of the revolution that in Russia had overthrown the Romanow, sheltered in the old political class[...]”<sup>1199</sup>. Juliá also describes many episodes of violence and of “social war” in the following years, between anarchist workers and patrons, between farming laborers and landowners, what led to Eduardo Dato’s appointment as Prime Minister in May 1920. Juliá explains that “the duration and the extension of these

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<sup>1197</sup> “Ludendorff, Winston Churchill y la realidad”, ‘ABC’, 13.08.1920, p. 8. Original quoted text: “la desmoralización de los polacos es tan completa, que ni el suministro de municiones ni el refuerzo de nuevas tropas podrá remediarla. La repercusión en Alemania será fatal. [...] Francia podrá invadir la Alemania occidental; pero no tiene fuerza suficiente para la gigantesca empresa de contener el colosal alud de Oriente y no se atreverá a remobilizar... Más pronto o más tarde-pronosticó Ludendorff-Alemania caerá presa del bolcheviquismo, y su capacidad industrial, sus recursos, su ciencia militar se sumarán fatalmente a las riquezas en substancias alimenticias, primeras materias y elementos humanos de su colosal vecino, constituyendo así una conminación roja invencible”.

<sup>1198</sup> T. Miłkowski, P. Machcewicz, *Historia Hiszpanii, op. cit.* p. 293.

<sup>1199</sup> S. Juliá, *Una monarquía liberal que termina en dictadura militar 1899-1930, Historia de España, red. J. Valdeón, J. Pérez, S. Juliá, Madrid 2006, p. 462.*

conflicts instilled a lot of fear in landowners, to whom the echoes of the Russian revolution had also arrived [...]”<sup>1200</sup>.

Therefore, it can be understood and interpreted that in Spain’s society and in the Spanish press, in 1920, the potential influence on Spanish society of the Polish-Soviet War result, especially of a hypothetical Soviet victory, was something that generated a lot of concern and interest.

In regard to Spanish views on Bolshevism and reactions to the Polish-Soviet conflict, it is worth highlighting that on August 23, 1920 ‘La Época’’s editors argued that it was surprising for them to see that many, without precisising if only in Spain or internationally, who during the Great War were favourable to Germany because of supporting the argument that Germany guaranteed “order and defence against revolution”, now in the Polish-Soviet War did not support Poland even if Poland, as the editors believed “in reality fights against communism which prevails and apparently rules in Warsaw”<sup>1201</sup>. This stand, which the newspaper criticised, corresponds to the fourth type of stands on the Polish-Soviet conflict in Spanish public opinion listed by historians Ciechanowski and González Gaitán, as it has been described in the introduction of this subchapter of the dissertation. Additionally, at this point it is also worth highlighting the usage of the term “communism” on ‘La Época’’s August 23, 1920 comment. ‘La Época’ added that among those who were favourable to Poland in this conflict, a majority were convinced that a Polish victory against the Bolsheviks would work against Germany’s interest in international relations. Nevertheless, the Spanish newspaper argued that if Poland won the war against Soviet Russia this would reduce the influence of the Third International in all European countries including Germany, and this is why the newspaper’s editors were surprised about the political views of part of the right wing [probably referring to Spain’s right wing politicians and press contributors] against Poland, which was, in their view, contradictory with the Germanophile attitude in war times of a faction of the right wing. The editors added that Poland’s victory against the Bolsheviks would not be enough to protect Western nations from “social revolution”, but it would greatly contribute to this goal because, as a result of Poland’s victory, there would be a lesser influence and less resources from the Bolshevik government for those in charge of propagating the Bolshevik revolution around the world,

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<sup>1200</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 464-465.

<sup>1201</sup> “La obra de la revolución”, ‘La Época’, 23.08.1920, p. 1.



[including those in Spain]. In their view, each country should protect itself from social revolution and show its working classes how fake [the Bolshevik] revolution was<sup>1202</sup>.

On to another question related to Spain's views on Bolshevism, it is extremely important to highlight that on October 3, 1920 Agüera reported to State Minister that a Polish foreign ministry official, whose name Agüera didn't reveal, informed him that in the Polish government there was a very negative reaction to "a hostile campaign against Poland that a certain part of the Spanish press had done in August, when the red troops were in Warsaw's doors". The Spanish diplomat added that the aforementioned Polish officer told him that Poland's representative in Spain, minister Władysław Skrzyński had noticed, and was both surprised and upset about it, "an anti-Polish attitude of certain political elements" in Spain<sup>1203</sup>. Agüera reported that he replied to the Polish Foreign Ministry official the same that he had already replied to the Polish foreign minister when the latter made a similar comment to him, meaning Agüera informed state minister that:

"their [Poland's] representative [in Spain] had not yet had enough time to get to know the press and the opinion in our country, because certain press organs didn't reflect exactly the feelings of the opinion in general, and that certain Germanophile elements aside, there were no Spaniards who sympathized with the Bolshevik cause and even less that would show themselves opposed to the independence and consolidation of the new state"<sup>1204</sup>.

In connection with this, it must be explained that on September 15, 1920 Spain's state minister sent a letter to Gutiérrez de Agüera asking for details on Spanish correspondent Álvarez del Vayo, after, according to Spain's state minister, Vayo published a very pro-communist article in the Spanish press<sup>1205</sup>. On October 4, 1920 Agüera reported that Spanish

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<sup>1202</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1203</sup> AHN, H1681, 3.10.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1204</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted words: "su representante en España no había tenido aun tiempo de conocer bien la prensa y la opinión de nuestro país, pues ciertos órganos de la primera no reflejaban exactamente los sentimientos de la segunda en general, y que aparte ciertos elementos germanófilos, no había españoles que simpatizaran con la causa bolchevista y aun menos que se mostraran contrarios a la independencia y consolidación de este nuevo estado".

<sup>1205</sup> AHN, H1681, 18.10.1920, Spain's State subsecretary Emilio de Palacios to Spain's ambassador in Germany Pablo Soler y Guardiola, referring to correspondence between State Minister Marquis of Lema and Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera on 15.09 and forwarding message from Agüera to State Minister on 4.10.1920.

journalist Álvarez del Vayo, contributor to 'El Sol', and correspondent in Berlin for Argentinian newspaper 'La Nación', came to Warsaw to cover the Polish-Soviet War. Agüera added that Del Vayo seemed ideologically close to the Bolsheviks, but was sent to Poznań with the other Spaniards when the evacuation of Spanish nationals was requested. About Vayo, Agüera added that:

“my first impression of Mr. Álvarez del Vayo was not very favourable to him, as I was also able to observe that he expressed himself in very vehement terms and he even seemed to be an admirer of the Bolshevik army and its organization, although he was careful not to show it to me”<sup>1206</sup>.

The exact article in the Spanish press to which Spain's state minister referred, which most likely must have been published in August or September 1920, has not been found among the examined Spanish newspapers. However, it is worth mentioning that on September 4, 1920 the weekly publication 'España' published an interview of Álvarez del Vayo to Soviet Russia's representative in Germany Vigdor Kopp<sup>1207</sup> and two texts by the Spanish correspondent, the first one about the strategies used by communism, published on June 26<sup>1208</sup>, and a text about the communist movement in Germany, which appeared on June 12<sup>1209</sup>. In the text about communism's strategies, a certain support of Del Vayo to communist ideas is seen.

This diplomatic correspondence on allegedly pro-Bolshevik ideas being propagated in Spain by a correspondent, is an unambiguous sign that Spain's diplomacy was completely opposed to Bolshevik ideas and that it was concerned about them. It is difficult to determine with the available sources if by then Spain's diplomacy was already aware about the complaint made by the minister of Poland's legation in Spain Władysław Skrzyński about pro-Bolshevik and anti-Polish attitudes in the Spanish press, about which Agüera reported for the first time on October 3, 1920.

In relation to Bolshevism and Spain it is also worth commenting, although it is sort of anecdotal, that on November 26, 1920, Casanova reported the conversation between her daughter Isabel "Bela" Lutosławski Casanova and a Bolshevik commissaire, called Riasin. As

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<sup>1206</sup> *Ibidem*, 4.10.1920, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to State Minister. Original quoted text: "mi primera impresión sobre el Sr. Alvarez del Vayo no fue muy favorable para él, pues también pude observar que se expresaba en términos muy vehementes y hasta parecía un admirador del ejército bolchevista y de su organización aunque se guardaba muy bien de demostrármelo".

<sup>1207</sup> "Desde Berlín, entrevista con un representante de los Soviets", 'España', num. 279-8, 4.09.1920, p. 6.

<sup>1208</sup> "La táctica del comunismo", 'España', num. 269-6, 26.06.1920, p. 4.

<sup>1209</sup> "El comunismo en Alemania", 'España', num. 267-7, 12.06.1920, p. 5.

Casanova accounted on the Spanish newspaper, Riasin told Bela that Bolshevism was already everywhere, to what Bela replied that not yet in Spain, but Riasin argued that it was also in Spain, as well as in most Western European countries, since Bolshevik ideas consolidated among working classes in the West<sup>1210</sup>.

### **Border negotiation between Poland and the Bolsheviks**

As in any peace negotiation the border question was also important in the Riga negotiations and both the examined Spanish diplomatic correspondence and press articles paid attention to this issue, although a lot more attention to the border negotiation is seen in Agüera's diplomatic reports than in the press.

'La Correspondencia de España' explained that the Polish delegates were not very demanding in the Riga negotiations, in terms of the suggested borders, in order to comply with the Entente's requests, "Nothing about that dream to extend the territorial dominium by searching new borders at the expense of Russia", the newspaper's editors claimed on September 18<sup>1211</sup>. In the same line, on September 29 'La Correspondencia de España' wrote that the allies' influence on the Polish government made Poles abandon imperialism and hunger of "territorial expansion" policies<sup>1212</sup>. Here it must be said 'La Correspondencia de España' was right, because, as Chwalba explains, Polish politicians saw it differently than Polish army men and wanted to request a border taking into account many factors that the Entente would accept<sup>1213</sup>. The author adds "socialists and populists warned, that the possession of too numerous ethnic minorities, especially Ukrainians, must lead to internal conflicts and to a weakening of the state. Poles cannot be a minority in their country"<sup>1214</sup>. In addition, Chwalba explains that the National Defence Council took a decision regarding the border they would demand in the negotiations with the Bolsheviks. The decision, the Polish historian explains, did not correspond to Piłsudski's preferred one, because Piłsudski was not so powerful within the

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<sup>1210</sup> "Los bolcheviques en Lomza IX y último", 'ABC', 26.11.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1211</sup> "Informaciones del extranjero. La Conferencia de Riga", 'La Correspondencia de España', 18.09.1920, p. 2.

<sup>1212</sup> "Informaciones del extranjero. La paz en oriente", 'La Correspondencia de España', 29.09.1920, p. 2.

<sup>1213</sup> Chwalba, A., *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polska-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, *op. cit.* p. 288.

<sup>1214</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "Socjaliści i ludowcy ostrzegali, że posiadanie zbyt licznych mniejszości narodowych, zwłaszcza Ukraińców, musi prowadzić do konfliktów wewnętrznych i do osłabienia państwa. Polacy nie mogą być mniejszością w swoim państwie".

National Defence Council anymore<sup>1215</sup>. Szczepański explains that “the incorporative direction, in line with the views of the National Democracy, was represented by professor Stanisław Grabski” and the author adds that “the territorial program of this direction foresaw the division of Belarus and Ukraine, although the pulled out border line would not correspond to the pre-Partition border”<sup>1216</sup>.

As Chwalba also explains, Polish army leaders like Tadeusz Jordan Rozwadowski and Kazimierz Sosnkowski wanted a Polish-Soviet border that “should include as many natural elements as possible, like rivers and marshes, and should guarantee Poland control over the main railway lines”. They believed the border should be as far as possible from the Polish capital and with differences among them their proposed borders were based on the Great War “German trenches”, taking into account strategic aspects but not “ethnic” ones<sup>1217</sup>. Meanwhile, Szczepański explains that on 11 September, 1920 the National Defence Council prepared instructions for the Polish delegation negotiating with the Bolshevik regarding the border that they wanted. The author explains that “the members of the National Defence Council were favourable to a safe, as moved to the east as possible, armistice border instead of “filling the line of the former German trenches. It had to be based on the railway line”<sup>1218</sup>. It is also worth mentioning that Chwalba underlines that the first border the Soviets proposed to the Poles on the negotiation table was the one made by the Bug and Niemem rivers, what was regarded as “offensive” by Poles<sup>1219</sup>.

On October 7, 1920, Agüera reported via telegram to State Minister that delegates of Soviet Russia in the Riga negotiations accepted to give up on an eastern Galicia plebiscite and on deciding about White Russian’s future and stated that despite not having an agreement on the border, on 8 October both parts would sign a preliminary peace agreement<sup>1220</sup>. It is worth

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<sup>1215</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

<sup>1216</sup> J. Szczepański, *Władze i społeczeństwo Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej wobec bolszewickiego zagrożenia w 1920 roku*, *op. cit.*, p. 475. Original quoted texts: “kierunek inkorporacyjny, zgodni z poglądami Narodowej Demokracji, reprezentował prof. Stanisław Grabski”; „program terytorialny tego kierunku przewidywał podział Białorusi i Ukrainy, choć wysuwana linia graniczna nie pokrywałaby się z granicą przedrozbiorową”.

<sup>1217</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 288. Original quoted text: „powinna zawierać jak najwięcej składników naturalnych, takich jak rzeki czy bagna, oraz gwarantować Polsce kontrolę nad głównymi liniami kolejowymi”.

<sup>1218</sup> J. Szczepański, *Władze i społeczeństwo Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej wobec bolszewickiego zagrożenia w 1920 roku*, *op. cit.*, p.474. Original quoted text: “Członkowie ROP opowiedzieli się za bezpieczną, najdalej wysuniętą na wschód granicą rozejmowa zamiast „obsadzania linii dawnych okopów niemieckich. Miała ona być oparta o linie kolejowa”.

<sup>1219</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 290.

<sup>1220</sup> AHN, H1681, 7.10.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

highlighting that in the end both parts signed the preliminary peace agreement with armistice with a border agreement but few days later, on October 12, so the agreement between both sides went beyond what Agüera expected. In addition, paradoxically, also on October 12 Agüera reported there were in the Riga negotiations “differences still important regarding the border line between both countries”<sup>1221</sup>. It seems Agüera didn’t know a border had been agreed with the armistice signed on the same day at the moment he wrote his diplomatic report<sup>1222</sup>. Still in connection with the armistice, Chwalba also explains that along the 12 October armistice there was an agreed border, which the author describes in the following way:

“The border line in the time of the armistice went along the Zbrucz, next to the east of Rivne and Łuniniec. In the north east upon Grabksi’s request a narrow strip of land was cut separating Lithuania from the Soviet state, which led to the border with Latvia in the Dzwina river. [The strip of land] was called the Grabski corridor”<sup>1223</sup>.

Still border-related, Chwalba explains that one of the questions that remained open, outside the agreed preliminaries, when the final peace negotiations in Riga were initiated was the belonging of Minsk either to Poland or to Soviet Russia and adds the Polish right wing was against having Minsk inside Poland because it believed the city would be a source of Byelorussian irredentism against the Polish state<sup>1224</sup>. The author highlights that “Minsk and Kamieniec Podolski in the end stayed on the Soviet side”<sup>1225</sup>. It must be added that references to the question of Minsk within or outside Poland in the border negotiation between Poles and Bolsheviks are not found on the examined Spanish sources.

Concerning the final borders agreed by the two belligerent sides in Riga, on March 21, 1921 Agüera reported to State Minister that he could reveal to the latter that, without knowing the content of the treaty yet, the eastern Polish borders established were very similar to those in the preliminary agreements “with small modifications favouring Poland”, mentioning Baturin,

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<sup>1221</sup> *Ibidem*, 12.10.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1222</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko bolszewicka 1919-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 260-262.

<sup>1223</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przegrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 290. Original quoted text: „Linia graniczna na czas rozejmu biegła Zbruczem, następnie na wschód od Równego i Łunińca. Na północnym wschodzie na wniosek Grabskiego został wykrojony wąski pas ziemi oddzielający Litwę i państwo sowieckie, który prowadził do granicy z Łotwą na Dźwinie. Nazywano go korytarzem Grabskiego”.

<sup>1224</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 293.

<sup>1225</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 290. Original quoted words: „Mińsk i Kamieniec Podolski pozostały po sowieckiej stronie”.

Radczkowice, Turow forest and Volhynia<sup>1226</sup>. Agüera did not write any comment on whether these were good borders for Poland or not. In relation to this, also regarding the ultimate resulting border from the war, Chwalba concludes that “The Riga border was a result of compromise. [...] This compromise didn’t satisfy any of the parts, because that is his nature”<sup>1227</sup>.

### **Geopolitical aspects of the Polish-Soviet War<sup>1228</sup>**

Many texts in the Spanish examined sources referred to geopolitical aspects, beyond Poland’s eastern policy, in relation to this conflict. In regard to Poland’s general geopolitical situation during the Polish-Soviet War, on March 26, 1920, Agüera concluded that he did not dare to claim if the existing Polish geopolitical conception was correct but he believed Poland would not survive as a state if it had to be placed between German communist on the West and Russian bolshevism on the East<sup>1229</sup>. However, Spanish press correspondent Ramiro de Maeztu saw the new Polish state’s unfortunate location from a different perspective and believed that the intended role for reborn Poland conceived by its creators in the West was precisely to have the new state between revolutionary Germany and revolutionary Russia. The Spanish writer argued that the Western allies conducted a foreign policy that consisted in “avoiding that Russians and Germans eventually unite to harm the Western allies”. In the Spanish writer’s view, this was “[...] a realist policy that has been practiced in Europe since a year and a half ago”. Maeztu added that Poland was the most important element of this policy in the East, while France was its most important element on the West. In his view, the existence of a “strong, rich, patriotic and united Poland” between Russia and Germany would ensure that the purpose of that policy is fulfilled<sup>1230</sup>. Thus, it can be interpreted that, according to Maeztu, Poland had an important geopolitical role to play within the Western Powers’ foreign policy to avoid Germany and Russia creating a political and military alliance.

Nevertheless, Maeztu explained that Poland did not have enough population to fulfil that geopolitical role of a strong state between Russia and Poland, because Poles were only 18

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<sup>1226</sup> AHN, H1681, 21.03.1921, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lwlor).

<sup>1227</sup> A. Chwalba, *Przebrane zwycięstwo, wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1918-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 295, “Granica ryska to wynik kompromisu.[...] Kompromis żadnej ze stron nie zadowolili, bo taka jest jego natura”.

<sup>1228</sup> See: J. Borzęcki, *The Soviet-Polish Peace of 1921 and the Creation of Interwar Europe*, 2008, *passim*.

<sup>1229</sup> AHN, H1681, 26.03.1920, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lwlor).

<sup>1230</sup> “Después del trance. Pan-Polonismo”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 4.09.1920, p. 1.

million. He added that at least 40 million inhabitants were needed to have an army that can “face such powerful neighbours as Germany and Russia, and that, naturally in case of having good allies”. In relation to this, Maeztu argued that Poland intended to compensate its lack of enough population by becoming, “as in its best times”, an Empire that was made of its neighbouring nations. Maeztu stated that the war against the Bolsheviks corresponded to this goal, precisely. So, it can be inferred that Maeztu saw the federal political conception, based in the idea of somehow recreating the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, to which implicitly he referred with the phrase “as in its best times”, both as a cause of the Polish-Soviet War and as a solution allowing Poland to have a strong state that kept Germany and Russia unallied and, therefore, allowed the new state to play the geopolitical role it had been assigned by the Western Allies<sup>1231</sup>.

On to another geopolitical aspect of the Polish-Soviet conflict, it is worth underlining that, according to ‘La Epoca’, “in the international order the North American policy in the Russian-Polish question is closer to the French criteria than to the English one”<sup>1232</sup>. However, Andrzej Nowak explains that “at the beginning of 1920 the American administration assessed that whatever autonomous action taken by Poland in Eastern Europe can only be damaging”. This author adds that when the Polish offensive in Ukraine was conducted, the United States opinion was not important anymore because this country no longer played an important role among the Western Allies<sup>1233</sup>. So, it can be inferred that US policy on the Polish-Soviet Russian question stopped being meaningful and the country was already on its way to an isolationist foreign policy.

It is also worth observing that whereas ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’'s editors claimed that Napoleon was right when he claimed “Poland was the key for the European balance”<sup>1234</sup>, similarly, on ‘ABC’, Gaston Routier quoted Winston Churchill having said “Poland is the keystone of the treaty of Versailles”<sup>1235</sup>, and Maeztu saw Poland as the key of the Western Allies’ eastern policy consisting in keeping Germany and Russia politically and diplomatically far from each other<sup>1236</sup>. At this point it is also worth mentioning that in his 1919 Spanish-

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<sup>1231</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1232</sup> “Ecos del día”, ‘La Epoca’, 19.08.1920, p. 1. Original quoted text: “En el orden internacional, la política norteamericana está en la cuestión rusopolaca más cerca del criterio francés que del inglés”.

<sup>1233</sup> A. Nowak, *Pierwsza zdrada zachodu. 1920 – zapomniany appeasement*, Kraków 2015, p. 98.

<sup>1234</sup> “La paz ruso-polaca y la situación europea”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 11.10.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1235</sup> “Ludendorff, Winston Churchill... y la realidad”, ‘ABC’, 13.08.1920, p. 8.

<sup>1236</sup> “Después del trance. Pan-Polonismo”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 4.09.1920, p. 1.

language book, published in Spain, Eugeniusz Frankowski, just like ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, also underlined that Napoleon believed Poland was crucial for “European balance” and argued that “if the fall of Poland was the direct or indirect cause of almost all the conflicts in Europe during the last century and a half, we can be sure that the flawed and incomplete resolution of its problems would be the cause of another war”<sup>1237</sup>. In addition, Frankowski highlighted that “in peace time, Poland, re-established as a free and strong state, faithful to its former past traditions, will be able to place all its forces to the service of humanity, the civilization and the common peace, whose ideas she has proven with the works of its past generations”<sup>1238</sup>. So, it can be claimed that in Frankowski’s view Poland’s existence was extremely important to maintain peace in Europe and at the same time Poland could play the role of an active peace keeper and mediator in the Old Continent<sup>1239</sup>.

### **Historical comparisons and analogies with the Polish-Soviet War**

A few historical comparisons or analogies are found in the examined Spanish press sources regarding the Polish-Soviet War. For instance, ‘ABC’’s Castell compared the success of Bolshevism with the success of the French Revolution. He highlighted that back then, after the French Revolution, Europe did not fall apart, and the same would be the case now<sup>1240</sup>.

Meanwhile, Casanova made an analogy between Piłsudski’s Poland with Jan Sobieski’s, because of both Poland’s, Piłsudski’s and Sobieski’s, fight to guard Western Christian civilization<sup>1241</sup>. In addition, Sofía Casanova also made an analogy between young Polish volunteers fighting the Bolsheviks and beating them without being properly equipped and both Jan Sobieski’s defence of Vienna against the Turks and John of Austria’s military success in the Battle of Lepanto, because in the Spanish writer’s view, those two leaders saved Europe “from Muslim hordes” and, in an equally epic way, Polish young aristocrats and peasants defended Europe from “Lenin’s destructors”<sup>1242</sup>.

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<sup>1237</sup> E. Frankowski, *Polonia y su misión en Europa*, *op. cit.*, p. 36. Original quoted text: “Si la caída de Polonia fue la causa directa o indirecta de casi todos los conflictos de Europa durante el último siglo y medio, podemos estar seguros que la defectuosa e incompleta resolución de su problema sería causa de otra guerra”.

<sup>1238</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Polonia, restablecida como Estado libre y fuerte, fiel a sus antiguas tradiciones del pasado, sabrá en tiempo de paz poner todas sus fuerzas al servicio de la humanidad, de la civilización y de la paz común, cuyas ideas ha demostrado con las obras de sus generaciones pasadas”.

<sup>1239</sup> See: M. Wołos, *A new order in Central and Eastern Europe: Polish-Soviet negotiations and the Peace of Riga (1920-1921)*, “Zapiski Historyczne” 2021, z. 2, p. 97-124.

<sup>1240</sup> “Apuntes de la semana”, ‘Blanco y Negro’, 22.08.1920, p. 12.

<sup>1241</sup> “De Rusia I”, ‘ABC’, 29.01.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1242</sup> *Ibidem*.



It is also worth adding, that Spain-based Polish archaeologist Eugeniusz Frankowski, in his aforementioned 1919 book about Poland's past, gained independence and future mission, compared Poland's role as saviour and defender of Western civilization in the past with Poland's equal role at the time against the Bolsheviks. He explained that:

“As in the Middle Ages [Poland] saved Europe from the tartar invasion in Lignitza (1241), it shattered the Teutonic order in Grunwald (1410), it defeated the Turks in Vienna (1683) saving this way the whole Central Europe from an imminent disaster, nowadays, guided by the same feeling it continues its role of defender, stopping the bloody hordes of Bolshevism. And in this moment she fights, not against the sublime ideas of freedom, but against this way of propagating it around the world”<sup>1243</sup>.

Another analogy was made by Sofía Casanova, referring to the recently finished Great War. She argued that Soviet Russia would: “follow the example of the Entente, which did not want to negotiate peace with Wilhelm II, [and] a Russia winner at the gates of Warsaw only wants to negotiate with a [Polish] sovietist government”<sup>1244</sup>. It can be interpreted that by “a sovietist government” she meant a revolutionist government run by local Bolshevik-supporting Poles or by Russian Bolsheviks of Polish origin. On the same newspaper where Casanova published her articles, ‘ABC’, the editors also made an analogy between the Polish-Soviet War and the Great War. Namely, on July 26, 1920 ‘ABC’ compared what happened in Germany at the end of the global conflict with what was already happening in Poland. The conservative newspaper argued that:

“The disgrace of Poland follows the same phases through which Germany went until the disaster: an armistice requested by means of the mediation of another power [in reference to Wilson's mediation], a refusal of this mediation by the adversary, a government crisis and the creation of a government in which the main figures are a prince [making an analogy between Sapieha and Prince Maximilian of Baden] and a

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<sup>1243</sup> E. Frankowski, *Polonia y su misión en Europa*, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

<sup>1244</sup> “ABC en Polonia. Ante el avance de los bolcheviques II”, ‘ABC’, 24.08.1920, p. 3. Original quoted text: “[...]siguiendo el ejemplo de la Entente, que no quería negociar la paz con Guillermo II; Rusia vencedora a las puertas de Varsovia no quiere negociar más que con un gobierno sovietista”.

socialist [making an analogy between Ignacy Daszyński and Erzberger]...Will the phase of revolution also arrive?"<sup>1245</sup>.

'ABC' also concluded that : "wars are sources of regime change, above all when these are lost"<sup>1246</sup>.

It must also be highlighted, outside primary sources, that as Norman Davies explains, during the Minsk conference Jan Dąbski in front of the Bolsheviks "compared the treatment of Poland by the Bolsheviks with the policies of Cataline the Great"<sup>1247</sup>.

### **Conclusions: Spain and the Polish-Soviet War 1919-1921**

A big concern about the development and result of the Polish-Soviet War, caused by fear of Bolshevik ideas' spreading in Spain, is perceived in many of the editorial texts and contributions in the Spanish press during the conflict.

Different views are perceived regarding the Polish offensive in Ukraine in the Spanish press, and when comparing these with Gutiérrez de Agüera's views in his correspondence to Spain's state minister, many similarities are seen. However, the Spanish diplomat's stand seems closer or more favourable to the Polish leaders' decisions than the stands on this question of most Spanish press editors' and contributors. As a matter of fact, criticism of the Polish offensive in Ukraine is very visible in Sofía Casanova's articles.

In addition, it can be claimed that in the both the Spanish press and Agüera's reports, with the exception, into a certain extent, of Sofia Casanova's articles, the Polish-Soviet War was analysed within the context of all the conflicts the Bolsheviks had open against different armies in Eastern Europe, so within the context of the wars that would decide the future of post-Tsarist Russia, and not only in regard to the Polish-Soviet conflict.

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<sup>1245</sup> "Boletín del día. Los aliados ayudan", 'ABC', 26.07.1920, p. 13. Original quoted text: "la desgracia de Polonia sigue las mismas fases por qué pasó Alemania hasta la catástrofe: un armisticio pedido por mediación de otra potencia: negativa del adversario a esta mediación: crisis ministerial y formación de un Gobierno en el que son figuras principales un príncipe y un socialista. ¿Llegará también la fase de la revolución?"

<sup>1246</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "las guerras son fuentes de cambios de régimen, sobre todo cuando son perdidas".

<sup>1247</sup> N. Davies, *Orzeł Biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920, op. cit.*, p. 257.

It must be also concluded that Gutiérrez de Agüera reported about the Polish-Soviet war and its diplomatic backdrop thoroughly, thanks to first-hand information obtained from his contacts within the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomatic corps.

It must be also underlined, as a conclusion, that Agüera highlighted French military contribution to Polish command in the war, what in his view was decisive for Poland's victories in the most difficult moment the new state faced, when the Bolshevik invasion threatened its very existence<sup>1248</sup>. In relation to this, it can be stated that during the Polish-Soviet War Spanish diplomacy was very subdued and connected to the diplomatic actions of the Western Allies, as Prince Władysław Lubomirski's request to Spain's King can prove (Lubomirski seemed to be aware of this), and this could have influenced Agüera's way of reporting about the French role, especially Weygand's role, in Poland's expulsion of the Bolshevik armies from the Polish ethnographic territories.

Last but not least, it must be concluded that Sofía Casanova referred to spiritual and religious aspects playing a role in both the result of the war and Poland's fate. However, these mystic references are not seen either in Agüera's reports to Spain's state minister or in Granzow's articles published on 'La Correspondencia de España'. It must be also noted that Granzow didn't publish so often about the conflict during its front operations peak, as in previous or later periods. This can be related to his responsibilities as chancellor of Spain's legation in the Polish capital and, perhaps, at least partially due to his work to organize the evacuation of Warsaw-based Spaniards to Poznań.

### Spain and the Polish-Lithuanian conflict over the Vilna region 1918-1921

Without a doubt, one of the events concerning complex and conflictive drawing of reborn Poland's borders with a bigger impact in Spain's politics and press was the Polish-Lithuanian dispute. The conflict had its military story and a diplomatic side, much more complex, with a impact in numerous European ministries of foreign affairs. This was, in addition, one of the first territorial disputes the League of Nations had to handle: the Vilna problem was parallel in time with the beginnings of the new arbitrage multinational organization.

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<sup>1248</sup> AHN, H1681, 31.08.1920, Spain's Plenipotentiary Minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

## Spain's Ministry of State And the Vilna Conflict

Spanish diplomacy followed the conflict with plenty of attention from its beginning, as attested by the numerous correspondence exclusively focused on this question sent by Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw, Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's Minister of State Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor (Marquis of Lema). Agüera, being a very experienced diplomat, followed the Polish-Lithuanian confrontation through three main sources: his conversations with the diplomatic corpus in Warsaw, his talks with Polish Foreign Minister, Prince Sapieha, and a thorough tracking of Polish press. Furthermore, he received information about ongoing discussions in the League of Nations from Spain's Ambassador in Paris and Spanish representative in the League of Nations Council, Jose Maria Quiñones de León.

In every moment, Agüera showed a good understanding of the Vilna question's status in the political, diplomatic, and military fronts. However, on his reports we can notice that his knowledge on the history of Vilna, Poland and Lithuania had some shortcomings. For instance, he referred to Piłsudski as a Lithuanian or as a Pole of Lithuanian origin<sup>1249</sup>, a definition that was not exact from an ethnographic point of view and indicates a certain confusion between the concepts of ethnographic Lithuania and historical Lithuania—the former Great Duchy of Lithuania inhabited by Poles, Lithuanians, Jews, White Russians and Ruthenians<sup>1250</sup>.

A key to understand the significance this conflict had for Spanish foreign policy is the task assigned by the League of Nations Council to Spain's representative in the organization, Jose Maria Quiñones de León to treat the Polish-Lithuanian dispute in the Council's sessions along with French politician Leon Bourgeois and Japan's representative, the Baron of Ishii, in the so-called "Committee of the Three"<sup>1251</sup>. It is not less important that the Spanish commandant Hercé, who was replaced, due to health issues, by his country fellow commandant Enrique Uzquiano in November 1920, was a member of the military control commission sent

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<sup>1249</sup> *Ibidem*, 3.07.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1250</sup> *Ibidem*, 24.09.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).; AHN, H1681, 16.11.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1251</sup> P. Bourneuff, *La Société des Nations et la force internationale à Vilna (1920-1921): un projet précurseur pour le maintien de la paix?*, [in] « Relations internationales », n° 166, 2016/2, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 2016, p. 87-102; p. 89.

to Vilna by the League and directed by French colonel Pierre Chardigny<sup>1252</sup>. This Spanish involvement was extremely important for the Polish government, which may have intended to influence on it, as proven by the fact that on September 30, 1920 Poland's Foreign Minister Prince Sapieha asked the top Spanish diplomatic representative in Poland, Gutiérrez de Agüera, if he knew anything about Spain's designation of a delegate to the aforementioned military commission<sup>1253</sup>.

Given that the League of Nations initiated a plebiscite project in order to solve the conflict, if we take into consideration the high-level role played by Quinones de Leon in this attempt, it was crucial for the Spanish diplomacy that the League's actions succeeded and the plebiscite took place as planned.

### **The Evolution of the Polish-Lithuanian Conflict**

If we want to chronologically review the Polish-Lithuanian conflict over Vilna since its beginnings, we should first look at 1918's New Year's Eve, when Polish local militias took control of the region in the moment when German troops, which had occupied it in 1915 during their Eastern Front campaign in the Great War, abandoned it. However, the Bolsheviks took Vilna five days later in January, although the region was recovered by Poles in April 1919. In July 1919 a demarcation line between Poland and Lithuania, known as the Foch Line, was established by the Entente. Such a line was less favourable for Lithuania than a line proposed by the Entente's High Council a month earlier. The most important aspect of the assigned line was that Vilna fell on Polish territory, and the Lithuanians were not willing to accept this<sup>1254</sup>. At that point, Polish diplomatic efforts were focused on convincing the Lithuanians to become a state within a great Polish federation, a proposal aligned with Piłsudski's federal vision for East-Central European countries neighbouring Poland<sup>1255</sup>. The Polish project was rejected by the Lithuanian leaders, who only aimed at full independence<sup>1256</sup>.

Kowno-based Lithuanian government demanded, from the Entente, the recognition of an independent Lithuania and a new demarcation line that would place Vilna in Lithuania's territory, so that the city could become the country's capital. In February 1920 Spain's

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<sup>1252</sup>*Ibidem*; "La intervención de España en Lituania. Dice el Ministro de estado. Consejo de Ministros", 'El Debate', 20.11.1920, p. 4.

<sup>1253</sup> AHN, H1681, 30.09.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1254</sup> In order to understand the Polish-Lithuanian conflict it is a must to read Piotr Łossowski, (the main Polish specialist on this topic) in: P. Łossowski, *Konflikt polsko-litewski 1918-1920*, Warszawa 1996.

<sup>1255</sup> On Piłsudski's federal vision, see, among others: N. Davies, *God's Playground. A History of Poland. Volume II. 1795 to the Present*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2011, p. 53-55.

<sup>1256</sup> P. Łossowski, *Konflikt polsko-litewski 1918-1920, op. cit.*, p. 80-85.

diplomatic representative in Warsaw interpreted that, from the Entente, the Lithuanian government demanded the possession of territories with a very low percentage of Lithuanian population and which the Lithuanians did not want included in an eventual plebiscite. Agüera was certain that Vilna should belong to Poland if the ethnographic statistics were considered. In his opinion, this was an unavoidable conflict, but he believed that Poland was, in fact, interested in the existence of some sort of Lithuanian statehood that could work as a “barrier against the Russian and German threats”<sup>1257</sup>. However, for Agüera the essential fact in Poland’s Lithuanian policy was that for Poles, “Wilno is a city as Polish as Warsaw or Cracow”<sup>1258</sup>. What is even more meaningful is that, at this stage of the conflict in spring 1920, the Spanish minister in Warsaw believed that Great Britain was more supportive of Lithuanian interests than of Polish ones in Vilna because Lithuania’s were also Britain’s interests<sup>1259</sup>. We can interpret Agüera’s analysis by understanding that Britain saw a stronger Poland at Germany’s east and in the Baltic area as a great geopolitical advantage for France and an increase of this country’s influence in Eastern Europe, what Britain opposed.

Leaving its international context aside, we should not regard the Vilna dispute as a two-side conflict, but as a three-side play, since this was also part of the war between Poland and Soviet Russia. In April 1920 Gutiérrez de Agüera properly interpreted that the Bolsheviks would try to take advantage of the Polish-Lithuanian confrontation and would increase the tension between both countries<sup>1260</sup>. In July, when the Bolsheviks were already reverting the status of the war against Poland and were advancing to the West, Agüera interpreted that Poles would not recover Vilna. He also claimed that those in Poland who dreamed about recovering the former Polish eastern lands until the 1772 border (Poland’s eastern border at the moment of the 1<sup>st</sup> partition) should forget about this<sup>1261</sup>. The decisive phase of the Polish-Bolshevik confrontation in summer 1920 caused a new twist in Vilna’s fate. The Bolsheviks took the region on July 14, after signing a treaty with Lithuania two days earlier. They expected this agreement would give them the chance of receiving Lithuanian support in the rear-guard of the Belorussian front against the Poles. Conservative newspaper “La Época”—closely politically aligned with the Spanish government—interpreted that Lithuania fought against Poland due to

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<sup>1257</sup> AHN, H1681, 16.02.1920, Spain’s Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain’s Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1258</sup> *Ibidem*, 13.04.1920, Spain’s Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1259</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1260</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1261</sup> AHN, H1681, 4.07.1920, Spain’s Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

the former's alliance with the Bolsheviks, and that these, after their defeat at the doors of Warsaw in August, were "more generous with Lithuania". According to this newspaper, Poland and Lithuania were condemned to be "natural allies" and the problems between Poles and Lithuanians would be solved as soon as the Bolsheviks would start losing terrain and influence<sup>1262</sup>. Such a forecast in regard to Polish-Lithuanian relations was proven wrong by time.

After the Polish victory against the Bolsheviks, on August 26 Lithuanians took advantage of the new scenario to take the city they claimed to be their capital<sup>1263</sup>. Two days later, the Spanish newspaper 'ABC' paid attention for the first time to the Polish-Lithuanian confrontation over Vilna in its own analysis articles. On the so-called "Boletín del Día"— a daily section focused on international affairs—, which on that day's edition was sarcastically titled "Polonia quiere la paz" (Poland wants peace), it was ironically argued that at the beginning of the Polish-Lithuanian conflict, Poles took Vilna and other territories inhabited by Lithuanians due to "pure altruism", because they wanted to save Lithuanians from bolshevism and afterwards give them [Lithuanians] Vilna back. 'ABC' claimed that Poland was a victim and wanted peace, exactly in the same way the French did before the Paris Peace Conference. The newspaper's editorial staff accused France of having intervened to impose its peace model to Poland, a country, in their view, built in the image and likeness of France<sup>1264</sup>:

"Poland is surely becoming the France of Eastern Europe, and it is true that, in character, procedures, conception of political morals and ability to change facts, the French of the East are much like the Poles of the West. And in case the latter lacked something, now they already have their Marne, their Foch and their "attack brusquée""<sup>1265</sup>.

The highest point of the Polish-Lithuanian conflict and its reception in Spain happened in autumn 1920, after the League of Nation's involvement in the dispute<sup>1266</sup>. As a matter of fact, at the beginning the international organization conceived by Wilson did not show a

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<sup>1262</sup> "El problema de la Lituania", 'La Época', 5.10.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1263</sup> P. Łossowski, *Konflikt polsko-litewski 1918–1920*, *op. cit.*, p.109-137, 155.

<sup>1264</sup> "Boletín del Día. Polonia quiere la paz", "ABC", 28.08.1920, p. 15.

<sup>1265</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "Polonia lleva todas las trazas de ser la Francia del Oriente de Europa, y en verdad que, en carácter, procedimientos, concepción de la moral política y habilidad para cambiar los hechos, se parecen mucho los franceses de Oriente a los polacos de Occidente. Y por si algo faltaba a aquellos ya tienen su Marné, su Foch y su "ataque brusquée".

<sup>1266</sup> P. Łossowski, *Konflikt polsko-litewski 1918–1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 146-160.

proactive attitude to solve Vilna's problem, but, instead, it engaged as a mediator of the dispute, once Poland requested it officially. This happened, according to Polish historian Stanisław Sierpowski, on September 4, 1920, when Polish Foreign Minister, Prince Sapieha warned the League of Nations about the possibility of an armed conflict between both nations caused by the fact that Lithuanian troops had crossed the Foch Line<sup>1267</sup>.

While the League of Nations was getting involved in an escalating conflict, Spain's State Ministry was permanently well informed about the latest diplomatic movements around the Vilna question. Agüera reported that Polish troops were advancing in direction to Lithuania while expelling the Bolsheviks, and that both the Polish Head of State Józef Piłsudski and right-wing Polish politicians wanted to see both Vilna and Kiev in Polish hands again, what in their view, as reported by the Spanish diplomat, "would solve the Polish-Lithuanian problem and liberate Kiev from the Bolsheviks for the sixth time"<sup>1268</sup>. On September 24, 1920 Spain's representative in Poland informed about the rupture of Polish-Lithuanian negotiations. In the Spanish diplomat's view, the Polish government had already abandoned the diplomatic stage and would try to resolve the conflict military, since the humble Lithuanian army was not a threat for the Polish armed forces. Agüera believed that the Polish request for the League of Nation's support in early September was not honest and its only goal was to justify an already planned operation to recover the territories initially assigned to Poland by the Entente's High Council, in addition to Grodno and Vilna<sup>1269</sup>. It must be highlighted at this point, that Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw correctly forecasted the events that would take place later in the disputed area.

The Polish-Lithuanian conflict entered a new stage on October 9, 1920, when general Lucjan Żeligowski's troops, after defeating a clearly inferior Lithuanian resistance, took control of the Vilna region. Officially, this was reported by Polish authorities as a rebellion, because the Polish general did not have the authorization either from Poland's government or from the Chief of State to undertake such an operation. In addition, Żeligowski's "coup" occurred only two days after Poland and Lithuania had signed a peace agreement in Suwałki. On October 10 Spain's minister in Warsaw claimed that Żeligowski's operation was an action of "indiscipline" by the Polish general and added that this discredited Poland's government and Ministry of

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<sup>1267</sup> S. Sierpowski, *Litewsko-polski stan wojny w świetle Paktu Ligi Narodów*, [in]: *Spoleczeństwo, państwo, modernizacja. Studia pod redakcją Włodzimierza Mędrzeckiego*, Warszawa 2002, p.71-80.; p. 72.

<sup>1268</sup> AHN, H1681, 28.09.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1269</sup> *Ibidem*, 24.09.1920. Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).



Foreign Affairs in front of the Entente, the League of Nations and even in front of Poland's own National Defence Council. In his view, the Vilna occupation conveyed Poland's lack of formality in the country's foreign relations. Agüera added that in Warsaw's "diplomatic circles" [meaning the Diplomatic Corps] Żeligowski's operation had not been well received and it was believed that it had had Piłsudski's permission<sup>1270</sup>. Two days later, Agüera, showing already a clearer stand regarding his view on the authorship of the Vilna operation, claimed that he believed—despite having Prince Sapieha in high consideration and believing in the Foreign Minister's good will—that Piłsudski and the Polish Foreign Minister were "partners in crime" in the operation, which he regarded "as a parody of [Gabriele] D'Annunzio's in Fiume"<sup>1271</sup>. In his view:

"Long ago it was known that General Zeligowski's divisions, composed of Lithuanians like their chief, or like Marshall Piłsudski, claiming the effervescence reigning among Vilna's sister [Polish] population were eager to come to free her. Despite this, those divisions in the vicinity of Vilna were not withdrawn, thus not avoiding conflict"<sup>1272</sup>.

The Spanish diplomat expected the Polish government to officially unauthorize Żeligowski to save Foreign Minister Sapieha's credit, even though this would not help solving the conflict<sup>1273</sup>. Agüera's prediction, made on October 12, 1920, was proved right by the later events.

On the days following Vilna's Polish takeover there were many references to the event in the examined Spanish newspapers. Some of these correctly interpreted that Piłsudski was behind Żeligowski's action, but most of them did not refer to such possibility explicitly, although they criticized Poland for what had happened. For example, "La Correspondencia de España" regarded Vilna's occupation as an illegal act of force against Lithuania. In addition, the pro-Allies conservative newspaper highlighted that in Vilna Żeligowski imitated the

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<sup>1270</sup> *Ibidem*, 10.10.1920. Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor);

<sup>1271</sup> *Ibidem*, 12.10.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1272</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "Hace tiempo se sabía que las divisiones del general Zeligowski compuestas de lituanos como su jefe, y como lo es también el mariscal Pilsudski, alegando la efervescencia reinante entre la población hermana de Vilno estaban impacientes por venir a libertarla. A pesar de ello no se retiraron aquellas divisiones de las proximidades de Vilno con lo que se hubiera evitado el conflicto".

<sup>1273</sup> *Ibidem*.

Bolshevist example when he left the city's administration positions in hands of Poles from the Vilna region, but for the occupation military action he used Polish soldiers from Poznań, Galicia and Warsaw—not only from Vilna as the rebellion-driven official version claimed. 'La Correspondencia de España' regarded Żeligowski's action as "a violation of Poland's commitments with the League of Nations" and asked the international arbitration institution to demand measures from Poland. However, we can infer that 'La Correspondencia de España's' editorial staff were not completely sure about whether Piłsudski was responsible for the coup or not<sup>1274</sup>.

In addition, in the Spanish press there were also constant comparisons between Żeligowski's operation and September 12, 1919 D'Annunzio's action in Fiume. On October 12, 1920 'El Debate' used the headline "A new Fiume?" and on the next day reacted with the headline "The Vilna's question. Poland unauthorizes"<sup>1275</sup>. 'ABC' and 'La Correspondencia de España' also saw a parallel between Żeligowski's and D'Annunzio's strategies<sup>1276</sup>. The former strongly criticized the League of Nations' stand on the conflict after Żeligowski's takeover of Vilna. According to 'ABC', the international organization had a different standard for Poland than for Lithuania: "How can the League not allow Lithuanians to solve their issues with Poland by using the same system Poland used to occupy territories that don't belong to it?"<sup>1277</sup>. In addition, the newspaper sarcastically commented on the Polish justification that Żeligowski was born in Vilna and that an important percentage of the population there was Polish, something which in 'ABC's' view had also been considered by the League. The monarchist newspaper's staff regarded the decision to organize a plebiscite as a comedy. They were sure that the League of Nations would favour Poland on this question as well, and that the international organization would not stop protecting the country, which was, in their view, "France's spoiled child"<sup>1278</sup>.

However, critical comments about Poland and the League of Nations not only came from either conservative or Germanophile media. Liberal newspapers also criticised the Polish attitude in the Vilna conflict and, above all, were favourable to Spanish neutrality towards international conflicts. For instance, the liberal and republican newspaper 'El Progreso'

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<sup>1274</sup> "La ocupación de Vilna", 'La Correspondencia de España', 16.10.1920, p. 2.

<sup>1275</sup> "¿Un nuevo Fiume?", 'El Debate', 12.10.1920, p.1; "La cuestión de Vilna. Polonia desautoriza". "El Debate", 13.10.1920, p. 2.

<sup>1276</sup>"Boletín del día. Los compromisos de la Liga", 'ABC', 19.11.1920, p.15.; "La ocupación de Vilna", 'La Correspondencia de España', 16.10.1920, p. 2.

<sup>1277</sup> "Boletín del día. Noticias de Vilna", "ABC", 27.11.1920, p. 17.

<sup>1278</sup> *Ibidem*.

understood that the Polish government had done nothing to revert Żeligowski's action. Additionally, this newspaper criticized the League of Nations for being partial in Poland's benefit and for favouring French interests in having a strong and extensive Poland east of Germany. According to "El Progreso", the Polish-Lithuanian dispute showed that the new international institution was in fact an Entente's instrument<sup>1279</sup>.

This newspaper also criticized the League's hypocrisy and the fact that the organization involved Spain in the Lithuanian issue. 'El Progreso' did so by means of a surprising history fiction reference to an imaginary hypothetical League of Nations's intervention in the 1898 Spanish-North American War:

"If the League of Nations is one thing to do justice to the peoples, to give each one what they deserve, instead of offering ourselves to be anyone's substitute and to put order in nations where we were not to blame for the interruption of peace, the case of the Philippines independence, which the Yankees now deny, the case of Puerto Rico, etc should be reminded in such Congress of Nations. These still drip blood, and it should be seen what the League's opinion would be in relation to our bitter complaints"<sup>1280</sup>.

'El Progreso' even used a Quixote-related reference that summarized what, in the editors' view, should be Spain's policy on foreign conflicts: "Those who broke the world down, should go fix it. Don Quixote does not make himself available; he will go to fight only when he loses his mind again"<sup>1281</sup>. In a similar way, 'El Debate's' contributor Francisco Martín Llorente (under the pseudonym Armando Guerra) depicted the Spanish mission to Vilna with a Quixotesque reference: "Only Don Quixote would go to Vilna, Sancho could not even keep the esparto that grows in the Rif's steppes in his saddlebags"<sup>1282</sup>.

On another liberal newspaper, "El Imparcial", there was a different tone regarding the Vilna question. Contributor Manuel Ciges Aparicio saw the League's mediation in Vilna as "a

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<sup>1279</sup> "¿Un caso de parcialidad?", "El Progreso", 5.12.1920, p. 1.

<sup>1280</sup> "Desde Madrid. La expedición a Lituania", "El Progreso", 23.11. 1920, p.1. Original quoted text: "Si la Liga de las Naciones es una cosa para hacer justicia a los pueblos a dar a cada cual lo que le corresponde, en vez de prestarnos a ser sustitutos de nadie y a poner orden en pueblos en que no tuvimos culpa que se interrumpiera la paz, recuérdese ante tal Congreso de Naciones el caso de la independencia de Filipinas, que ahora niegan los yanquis, el de Puerto Rico, etc. que aún chorrean sangre, y véase cuál sería la opinión de la Liga en relación con nuestras amargas quejas".

<sup>1281</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "Los que descompusieron el mundo, que lo arreglen. Don Quijote no da licencia para que de él se disponga; va a la lucha solamente cuando pierde nuevamente la razón".

<sup>1282</sup> "Satélites de Francia", 'El Debate', 20.11.1920. Original quoted text: "A Vilna iría solo Don Quijote, Sancho no podría guardar en sus alforjas ni el esparto que se cría en las estepas rifeñas".

duty”, but also understood that this conflict was too big a challenge for an organization that had just started working<sup>1283</sup>. In addition, the correspondent in Riga of the same newspaper, Enrique Domínguez, assured that the resulting litigations from Poland’s territorial ambitions in an area which he called “The Balkans of the Baltic” hampered peace in Europe, but at the same time he accused Lithuania of wanting to dominate “Jews, White Ruthenians and Poles, the latter being a majority in the regions that the Lithuanians intend to *lithuanize*”<sup>1284</sup>.

The impact of the conflict in the Spanish press was so big that not only the main newspapers were interested in Żeligowski’s action. A good example is the organ of the Spanish Maritime League “Vida Marítima”, which was very critical of the Vilna’s occupation and claimed that the Polish coup “stoke hatred” in Eastern Europe<sup>1285</sup>.

Meanwhile, Poland launched its diplomatic machinery to tackle the foreseen discredit of the Polish cause in Spain. On October 14, 1920, Poland’s plenipotentiary minister in Spain, Władysław Skrzyński handed a note to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema to be forwarded to the Spanish press:

“A division made up of soldiers from the Vilna government violated the order to stop and occupied Vilna. The Polish government does not sympathize with this action, which it disapproves, and is taking serious measures to restore discipline and calm the restless effervescence in the parts of the army that are made up of soldiers,, equip them with houses that are further East from the line established by the League of Nations Commission”<sup>1286</sup>.

The note was forwarded by Spain’s Ministry of State to the media on the same day and its content appeared as a press note on October 15 even on then critical of Poland ‘ABC’<sup>1287</sup>. It

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<sup>1283</sup> “La Liga de las Naciones. Resultados positivos”, “El Imparcial”, 28.11.1920, p. 1.

<sup>1284</sup> “En los umbrales de Rusia. Por los Balkanes del Báltico”, ‘El Imparcial’, 19.12.1920, p. 1. Written in November 1920 according to the author’s signature.

<sup>1285</sup> “La situación internacional”, ‘Vida Marítima’, 20.10.1920, p. 5.

<sup>1286</sup> AHN, H1681, 14.10.1920, Poland’s Minister in Spain Władysław Skrzyński to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lwlor). Original quoted text: “Una división compuesta por soldados del gobierno de Vilna violó la orden de detenerse y ocupó a Wilno. El gobierno polaco no se solidariza con esta acción, que desaprueba, y está tomando medidas serias para restablecer la disciplina y calmar la efervescencia inquieta en las partes del ejército que están compuestas por soldados, dotarlos de las casas que están al este de la línea fijada por la Comisión de la Liga de las Naciones”.

<sup>1287</sup> “De estado”, ‘ABC’, 15.10.1920, p. 9. The newspaper’s editors introduced Skrzyński’s note, whose content matched exactly the one provided by the Polish minister in Madrid, with the following text: “Yesterday afternoon Poland’s diplomatic representative in this court visited state minister to communicate to him, upon his government’s request, the following statement:”. Original text in Spanish: “Ayer tarde visitó al Ministro de Estado

unlinked the Polish government from Żeligowski's operation, and was a clear attempt to mitigate the negative impacts for the Polish cause that the information published about the Polish partial occupation of historical Lithuania already had had and would still have in Spain.

After Vilna's seizure, Żeligowski created a new state entity called Central Lithuania in the terrains under his domain, and he nominated himself as its ruler. After the later clashes between Lithuanian and Żeligowski's troops, the dispute entered a new phase in the diplomatic arena thanks to the League of Nation's arbitrage. It was, in part due to the work of the League's military commission that an armistice between Lithuania and Central Lithuania was signed in Kowno on November 29<sup>1288</sup>.

This new stage of the conflict, of a purely diplomatic nature, was extremely important for Spain's Ministry of State due to the League's role of mediator in the dispute by means of the organization of a plebiscite. Moreover, it must be understood that Spain had ambitions to play an important role in the League of Nations.

In regard to the echoes of the conflict's diplomatic front in Spain's State Ministry, it must be explained that on November 1, 1920 Spain's top diplomat in Warsaw, informed Spain's representative in the League of Nations, Quiñones de León, that the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prince Sapieha was considering the possibility of accepting the League of Nation's plebiscite, but the Polish government would not ask Żeligowski to withdraw his troops<sup>1289</sup>. Agüera personally talked with Sapieha about the League's requirement imposing that Żeligowski should withdraw his troops before the plebiscite takes place<sup>1290</sup>. On that matter, Polish Foreign Minister told Agüera that "the League should address this request directly to general Żeligowski, who would not reject it, as long as it did not imply a total and ultimate evacuation [of his troops], but only a temporary evacuation to allow the voting to take place in each designated zone"<sup>1291</sup>.

According to Spain's minister in Warsaw, the news about the possibility of the League of Nations sending foreign troops to Vilna were not well received in Poland's political

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el representante diplomático de Polonia en esta corte, para comunicarle, por encargo de su Gobierno, la siguiente declaración".

<sup>1288</sup> P. Łossowski, *Konflikt polsko-litewski 1918–1920*, op. cit., p. 217-219; P. Bourneuff, *La Société des Nations et la force internationale a Vilna (1920-1921): un projet précurseur pour le maintien de la paix?*, op. cit., p. 91.

<sup>1289</sup> AHN, H1681, 1.11.1920, Spain's representative in the League of Nations Council José María Quiñones de León to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1290</sup> *Ibidem*, 3.11.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1291</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "esta demanda correspondía a la Liga formularla directamente al general Żeligowski quien no creía se opusiera a ello sino de trata de una evacuación total y definitiva sino llevada a efecto solo por el tiempo preciso para proceder al voto en cada zona".

environment and society. In addition, in his opinion, in Poland many doubted that the plebiscite and the contingent would finally happen<sup>1292</sup>. In the Spanish diplomat's view, the Polish government did not like the voting solution to resolve the dispute, but the Warsaw rulers were not in a situation that would allow them to refuse this. It is for this reason that the Polish government later regretted having asked for the League's intervention, because Poland only requested the international organization to demarcate an armistice line and it did not request the League to solve the whole dispute. Once the conflict was in hands of the international arbitration institution, there was no way to push back its bureaucratic actions<sup>1293</sup>. The exact same interpretation is exposed by Polish historian Piotr Łossowski, who attributes the mistake, in his view, of asking the League of Nations to intercede in the Vilna territorial conflict to the then Polish representative in the international organization, former Prime Minister and former Foreign Minister Ignacy Jan Paderewski<sup>1294</sup>.

In November 1920 Agüera reported that the Polish government would never accept a plebiscite area including the city of Kowno and would only consider the voting option if it was limited to Vilna inhabitants' decision on their national belonging. In addition, he highlighted that the head of the League's Military Control Commission, colonel Chardigny, shared the Polish view on what the plebiscite area should be<sup>1295</sup>.

In December 1920 a League of Nations' special commission of civilian control was launched to oversee the plebiscite organization onsite. The commission would be managed by Spain's Pedro Saura—the country's consul in Brussels—along with Great Britain, Italy and Belgium representatives<sup>1296</sup>. It was Quiñones de León who took the decision of appointing Saura as one of the commission members who would travel to Lithuania because he believed the Spaniard's presence in the disputed area would be useful for the League<sup>1297</sup>.

### **The Spanish Troops' Planned Mission to Vilna**

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<sup>1292</sup> *Ibidem*, 17.10.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1293</sup> *Ibidem*, 3.11.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1294</sup> P. Łossowski, *Konflikt polsko-litewski 1918–1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>1295</sup> AHN, H1681, 29.11.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1296</sup> P. Bourneuff, *La Société des Nations et la force internationale a Vilna (1920-1921): un projet précurseur pour le maintien de la paix*, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

<sup>1297</sup> AHN, H1681, 7.12.1920, Spain's Chargé d'Affaires in Paris Marquis of Faura to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

The main reason why this conflict took a considerable place on the Spanish newspapers' pages was the League of Nations' decision to send an international contingent, with the participation of Spanish troops, to the Vilna region. The mission's goal was to guarantee the voters' freedom and security in a plebiscite that had to decide if the disputed territories would be part of either Poland or Lithuania. In the November 16, 1920 Ministers Council, Spain's government under Eduardo Dato's (conservative) presidency approved the country's contribution to the international contingent<sup>1298</sup>. Spain's participation would consist of two marine infantry units<sup>1299</sup>.

If Spain had finally sent its troops, this would have been the first Spanish intervention of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in an armed conflict out of the country's colonial and protectorate areas. It would have also been Spain's first military intervention abroad after the Great War. It is important to highlight that neutral Switzerland, host of the League of Nations headquarters, paradoxically announced that it would not let the League contingent troops cross its territory<sup>1300</sup>. The Helvetic Confederation justified its decision by arguing that the contingent's troops were not going on a peace mission, since there was a huge risk that they would clash with either the Bolsheviks or Żeligowski's troops<sup>1301</sup>.

A significant part of the Spanish press saw Spain's interference in the Vilna conflict, even if it was under the League of Nations initiative, as an action against the pro-neutrality policy that had been characteristic of Spain's foreign policy during the Great War. In addition, a few media feared that this intervention would bring potential risks for Spain's diplomacy and security. For instance, 'ABC' highlighted that Spain had joined the League of Nations to build peace and the contingent to Vilna was not heading towards such a goal. The monarchist newspaper regarded the Lithuanians as the victims of Poland's and the League's actions<sup>1302</sup>:

“Who is this naval demonstration that Spain would perform against? -we asked. Is it against the Lithuanian people? What hostile act to the League or threat to world peace did the Lithuanian Government commit to deserve such a punishment? Is it perhaps its fault having its ground invaded by the troops of General Żeligowski, whose

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<sup>1298</sup> “La intervención de España en Lituania”, “El Debate”, 20.11.1920. p. 4.

<sup>1299</sup> AHN, H1681, 16.11.1920, Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor) to Spain's Representative in the League of Nations Council Quiñones de León.

<sup>1300</sup> “Boletín del día. La “Sagesse” de Suiza”, ABC”, 18.02.1921, p. 19.

<sup>1301</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1302</sup> “Boletín del día. Los compromisos de la Liga”, “ABC”, 19.11.1920, p. 15.

conduct is not due to his own initiative, but a result of secret orders given by the Warsaw imperialists? [...]”<sup>1303</sup>.

According to ‘ABC’, Spain’s involvement in the Vilna question sent a message to the League of Nations telling it that it could always count on Spanish troops for other interventions in conflict areas:

[...] It would be an honour for Spain ... we all know that, and we don't deny it. However, it would set a precedent that must be avoided at all costs: the precedent that the League can dispose of our soldiers and sailors when it seems appropriate. Today it is a simple demonstration without danger and tomorrow may be something else. The world is very messy; many fires of war are hiddenly burning, and at every moment devastating [events] may arise [...] we have peace with all peoples, we have no hatred of anybody or grievances to avenge; [...]”<sup>1304</sup>.

On ‘ABC’ most editorial comments in relation to the Vilna conflict were critical of Poland, the League and France. However, ‘ABC’’s correspondent in Warsaw, Sofía Casanova, showed a different perspective, focused on justifying the disputed region’s Polishness. For instance, she claimed that Lithuania was “a region with almost no history” and described Lithuanians from rural areas as a very backward people. Casanova argued that the arrival of Polish settlers to Lithuanian lands in the time of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth generated a bit of a distancing between the two nations, but the real estrangement occurred after Poland’s partitions in late 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1305</sup>.

One of Spain’s most renowned commentators on the Great War, aforementioned ‘El Debate’’s contributor Francisco Martín Llorente (pseudonym Armando Guerra) had a similar

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<sup>1303</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “¿Contra quién es esa demostración naval que haría España?-preguntamos. ¿Es acaso contra el pueblo lituano? ¿Qué acto hostil a la Liga o de amenaza para la paz mundial cometió el Gobierno lituano para merecer tal castigo? ¿Es acaso el tener su suelo invadido por las tropas del general Zeligowski cuya conducta no es de su propia iniciativa, sino de órdenes secretas dadas por los imperialistas de Varsovia? Para garantizar el orden de Lituania...Pero ¿quién lo turba? ¿No son las tropas polacas, con los elementos de guerra que les diera Francia?”

<sup>1304</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “[...]Sería un honor para España...todo eso lo sabemos y no lo negamos. Sin embargo, sentaría un precedente que es necesario evitar a toda costa: el precedente de que la Liga puede disponer de nuestros soldados y marinos cuando le parezca oportuno. Hoy es una simple demostración sin peligros y mañana puede ser otra cosa. El mundo está muy revuelto; muchos incendios de guerra arden ocultos, y a cada momento pueden surgir devastadores. [...]nosotros tenemos paz con todos los pueblos, no tenemos odio a ninguno ni agravios que vengar [...]”

<sup>1305</sup> “Intervalo de Paz sin Paz II”, ‘ABC’, 13.12.1920, p. 3-4.



stand to ‘ABC’'s on the contingent to Vilna question. Guerra argued that Spain, by being an active member of the League of Nations and getting involved in the Vilna conflict, had just become one of “France’s satellites”<sup>1306</sup>. In 1918, the writer and cartographer, who never hid his Germanophile tendency, had written a few comments that were rather favourable to the Polish cause<sup>1307</sup>, but this time he prioritized his advocacy of Spanish neutrality and a critical view of both the Wilsonian system and the French policy on East-Central Europe:

“Showing up in Vilna as representatives of the League of Nations, as afterpains undoers, to distribute with justice the land between Lithuania and Poland is worth as much as taking a ticket for the next war in defence of Polish interests, and therefore of interests of France, and being exposed to collide with England [...] it is not to be imagined that the conflict between Lithuania and Poland over the Vilna possession will be resolved peacefully, knowing that tiny nation that behind her are the Bolsheviks [...] Showing up in Vilna, I repeat, is to tempt the devil, because the day that the blood of a Spanish soldier is shed for a cause that does not interest us, Spain will be forced to pour blood and money from its coffers. I encourage our rulers to meditate a lot before pushing Spain to an adventure”<sup>1308</sup>.

In addition, the well-known columnist compared the League’s intervention in Lithuania with the conflicts Spain was facing in Morocco:

“What would happen if tomorrow, if in order to defend the Poles’ interests, (which are those of France) that are not ours, or those of the Lithuanians, we were involved in a war somewhat bloodier than the war against the Arabs?”<sup>1309</sup>.

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<sup>1306</sup> “Satélites de Francia”, ‘El Debate’, 20.11.1920, p. 3.

<sup>1307</sup> “La situación militar”, ‘El Debate’, 13.01.1918, p. 1.; “La situación militar”, ‘El Debate’, 16.01.1918, p. 1; “La situación militar”, ‘El Debate’, 18.01.1918, p. 1.; “La situación militar”, ‘El Debate’, 13. 02.1918, p. 1.

<sup>1308</sup> “Satélites de Francia”, ‘El Debate’, 20.11.1920, p. 3. Original quoted text: “asomar por Vilna como representantes de la Sociedad de Naciones, como desfacedores de entuertos, para repartir en justicia la tierra entre Lituania y Polonia vale tanto como tomar billete de preferencia para la próxima guerra en defensa de los intereses polacos, y por tanto de los intereses de Francia, y expuestos a chocar con Inglaterra[...] no es de imaginar que se resuelva pacíficamente el conflicto entre Lituania y Polonia por la posesión de Vilna, sabiendo aquella diminuta nación que a su espalda están los bolcheviques [...] Asomar, pues por Vilna, repito, es tentar al diablo, porque el día que se derrame la sangre de un soldado español por una causa que no nos interesa, obligada estará España a verter ya raudales de sangre y el dinero de sus arcas. Invito a nuestros gobernantes a que mediten muy mucho antes de lanzar a España a una aventura”.

<sup>1309</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “¿Qué ocurriría si mañana por defender los intereses de los polacos (que son los de Francia) que no son los nuestros, o los de los lituanos, nos viéramos metidos en una guerra algo más cruenta que y aún algo más que la guerra contra los árabes?”

On the side of the liberal Spanish press, 'El Progreso' argued that Spain should not meddle in the Polish-Lithuanian problem because that would endanger the country's neutrality and the good relations established during the Great War, thus exposing Spain to enter a bigger conflict: "But what are we doing in Lithuania? It will be the question that every Spaniard is going to ask today, and much more when they see that we are going to have to send some warships and marines"<sup>1310</sup>. The newspaper added that if France had taken a responsibility in the Polish-Lithuanian conflict, it should be this nation that had to seek for a solution on its own<sup>1311</sup>.

The Ministry of State's confirmation of the army mission to Lithuania appeared in the press on November 20, 1920<sup>1312</sup>. It is important to highlight that the news about the Spanish contribution to the League's contingent first reached the Spanish people through notes in the Spanish press coming from foreign press agencies that had reported on the League's note about it even before the Spanish government confirmed its agreed with the League plan to send the troops<sup>1313</sup>.

Not only the Spanish press had paid attention to Spain's contribution to the League efforts in Vilna. Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw reported on some sarcastic comments in the Polish press about the League of Nations sending marine infantry to Vilna, highlighting, among these Polish press comments, one claiming that "[The League of Nations and Spain] intend to fix Polish issues sending a Swiss admiral to Danzig and Spanish toreros to Vilna". However, not everything regarding Spain and the contingent was critical. Spain's diplomat forwarded to the State Minister an article, which was very favourable to Spain, published on the Polish newspaper 'Kurier Poranny', under the title "Spain and Poland. Sending the Spanish contingent is not an act of hostility toward Poland"<sup>1314</sup> The fragment of the article that was quoted by Agüera was:

"We learned in diplomatic areas that in Spain great importance is given to the contingent's shipment to Vilna. In those political spheres, it is desired that this act will

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<sup>1310</sup> "Desde Madrid. La expedición a Lituania", 'El Progreso', 23.11.1920, p. 1. Original quoted text: "Pero ¿qué se nos ha perdido a nosotros en Lituania? será la pregunta que se haga hoy todo español, y mucho más cuando vea que nada menos vamos a tener que enviar unos buques de guerra y fuerzas de infantería de marina".

<sup>1311</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1312</sup> "La intervención de España en Lituania", 'El Debate', 20.11.1920, p. 4.

<sup>1313</sup> We find the first information in the Spanish press about the troops' shipment to Vilna on "La Correspondencia de España" on November 17, 1920, on "ABC", "El Debate", and "El Imparcial" it appeared on November 19. On "El Progreso" it appeared one day later.

<sup>1314</sup> AHN, H1681, 3.12.1920, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

not be interpreted as an act of enmity against the Polish state and government. Spain takes part in the expedition only under the pressure of the League of Nations and along with other European countries. This show of the best feelings towards the Polish people and for sure in the Spaniards who go to Vilna the Poles will find their most selfless help. The king of Spain during the Great War time has not ceased to offer his powerful protection to Polish subjects. We must be convinced that it would not be pleasant or favourable for Poland if in the Vilna action would not appear states with which Poland has never had any trouble”<sup>1315</sup>.

It would be important to determine in further research what the exact ‘Kurier’'s sources were, when referring both to the significance in Spain of the troops’ mission to Vilna and to Spain’s concern about its institutional image in Poland. The topic of the Spanish king protecting Polish subjects has already been covered in chapter 1.

In late 1920 and early 1921 Spain it was taken for granted that the two designated marine infantry units would travel to Vilna with the League’s international contingent. This information also reached one of the very few Spaniards who then lived in Poland, priest Amadeo Ponz Martínez (or Pons, depending on the source)<sup>1316</sup>. Since he was so convinced that the Spanish troops would travel to Vilna, he contacted Spain’s Ministry of State to offer his services as an interpret or as a chaplain for his country fellows<sup>1317</sup>. Ponz was very well acquainted with Polish affairs, as it is seen in the article that he wrote about the Vilna conflict, published on “El Universo” on December 29, 1920<sup>1318</sup>. He argued that Vilna’s belonging to Poland was out of discussion. According to Ponz, Poland was the keeper of the Latin culture in the East and the city of Vilna was essential in fulfilling such a role and also important as a

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<sup>1315</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text in: “Nos enteramos en las esferas diplomáticas que en España se le da gran importancia al envío del contingente a Vilno. En aquellas esferas políticas se desea que dicho acto no sea interpretado como un acto de enemistad contra el estado y gobierno polaco. España toma parte en la expedición únicamente bajo la presión de la liga de las naciones y juntamente con otros países europeos. Esta muestra de los mejores sentimientos hacia el pueblo polaco y seguramente que en los españoles que vayan a Vilno encontrarán los polacos su más desinteresada ayuda. El rey de España durante toto el tiempo de la gran guerra no ha dejado de prestar su poderosa protección a los súbditos polacos. Debemos estar convencidos de que no sería agradable ni favorable para Polonia si en la acción de Vilno no figuraran estados con los cuales Polonia no ha tenido nunca disgustos”.

<sup>1316</sup> In 1918 first lecturer of the new Spanish language and literature chair in Poland, at the University of Warsaw. [https://www.iberystyka.uw.edu.pl/sites/default/files/Documents/adamczyk/1293/KOSZLA-SZYMAŃSKA-M-M\\_100%20lat%20j.%20hiszp.%20w%20Polsce.pdf](https://www.iberystyka.uw.edu.pl/sites/default/files/Documents/adamczyk/1293/KOSZLA-SZYMAŃSKA-M-M_100%20lat%20j.%20hiszp.%20w%20Polsce.pdf) [accessed 12.08.2024]

<sup>1317</sup> AHN, H1681, 28.12.1920, Amadeo Ponz Martínez to Spain’s Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor).

<sup>1318</sup> “Sobre el plebiscito polaco-lituano. El carácter polaco de Wilna”, ‘El Universo’, 29.12.1920, p. 4.

symbol of Roman culture<sup>1319</sup>. He highlighted that renowned Poles, such as writers Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Słowacki, historian Joachim Lelewel, the mathematician Jan Śniadecki as well as political and military leaders Tadeusz Kosciuszko and Józef Piłsudski either had been born there or were linked to this region. In Ponz's opinion, Germany, by trying to prove that Polish claims on Vilna were not justified, wanted to delegitimize previous census in the region and organized their own one in 1915. However, in his view, the census's results<sup>1320</sup> frustrated the Russian, German and Lithuanian ambitions on Vilna.

### **The League of Nations' Failure in Vilna**

Negotiations between Poles and Lithuanians, by means of the League's mediation, in order to organize the plebiscite continued in late 1920 and early 1921 and generated contradictory information about their status in Spain's press and diplomacy. On January 5, 1921 Gutiérrez de Agüera reported about the suspension of Polish-Lithuanian negotiations on the plebiscite details. The Spanish diplomat argued that the causes for the conflict's blockage were, on the one hand, the Polish unwillingness to remove its troops from Vilna and, on the other hand, the Lithuanian unwillingness to include the city of Vilna in the plebiscite area<sup>1321</sup>. However, according to news appearing five weeks later in the newspaper "El Sol"<sup>1322</sup>:

"[...] Marshal Piłsudski, during his stay in Paris, made Messrs. Bourgeois, Quiñones de León and Baron de Ishi an official communication on behalf of the Polish Government in which Lithuania's wishes were met. The troops of General Zeligowski will evacuate Vilna: the reorganization of that territory is accepted, excluding Polish elements from it [...]"<sup>1323</sup>.

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<sup>1319</sup> Ponz claimed that during the Partitions of Poland Russia had tried to erase the traces of Latin Civilization in the Vilna region. For instance, in the city's gothic churches, which reminded of those in Italy, the domes had been transformed into those with onion-like shapes which are typical in orthodox temples.

<sup>1320</sup> The census results featured by Pons in his article on "El Universo" were the following: Poles 74.466, 53.65%; Jews 57.516, 41.45%; Lithuanians 2909, 2.10%; Russians 2212, 1.60%; White Ruthenians 611, 0.44%; Germans 880, 0.63%; Others 193; 0.13%. Pons mentions Michał Brenzstein's publication (without specifying its title) as the source of the data. In fact, Ponz obtained the census data from *Spisy Ludności m. Wilna za okupacji niemieckiej od d. 1 listopada 1915 r.*, Warsaw 1919. Available for reading on the digital library of Kujawo Pomorskie voivodeship. <http://www.kpbc.ukw.edu.pl/dlibra/plain-content?id=37961>. [Accessed on 10.09.2018].

<sup>1321</sup> AHN, H1681, 5.01.1921, Spain's Minister in Warsaw Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor),

<sup>1322</sup> "El plebiscito de Vilna. Una nota de la Sociedad de Naciones", "El Sol", 11.02.1921, p. 7.

<sup>1323</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: "[...]el mariscal Pilsudski, durante su estancia en París, hizo a los señores Borgeois, Quiñones de León y barón de Ishi una comunicación oficial en nombre del Gobierno polaco en la cual quedan atendidos los deseos de Lituania. Las tropas del general Zeligowski evacuarán Vilna: queda aceptada la reorganización de aquel territorio excluyendo de ella a los elementos polacos[...]".

The facts presented in this news—according to which the first agreements for the negotiated Polish-Bolshevik peace in Riga would allow the arrival of the international contingent—never became a reality, since Żeligowski’s troops did not abandon Vilna<sup>1324</sup>. As historian P.E. Bourneuf describes it, the League’s civil commission director in Vilna, colonel Chardigny<sup>1325</sup>—after having rejected requests within the League to send part of the contingent to Danzig and Memel in order to pressure both countries— obtained the Polish commitment to retire the troops, but Poland continuously delayed the evacuation<sup>1326</sup>. At the same time, Spaniards Saura y Uzquiano, as members of the civil and military control commissions of the League, respectively, checked onsite that not even the plebiscite accomplishment could solve the conflict<sup>1327</sup>. In September 1921 Uzquiano reported to State Ministry that his view on the conflict, initially more sympathetic for the Lithuanian side, over time evolved to become less critical of Poland’s stand, once he realized there were very few Lithuanians in the disputed city and that the Kowno government did not represent the views of the whole region’s population. In addition, when Uzquiano moved from Vilna to Kowno, he realized that the Lithuanian government had views nearing bolshevism and, furthermore, Lithuanians did not have efficient political leaders, due to a lack of *intelligentsia* in their society. However, in Uzquiano’s opinion, in the long term it was in Poland’s best interest to keep good relations with Lithuania, given Poland’s bad relations with its western and eastern neighbours, Germany and Bolshevist Russia, not only to have a neighbouring ally but also to use Lithuania as a bridge, especially with Germany, which, in his view, had an increasing influence in the Baltic country<sup>1328</sup>.

Facing a total blockage scenario<sup>1329</sup>, the League of Nations officially and ultimately resigned from the plebiscite idea on March 3, 1921, and decided to focus on direct negotiations

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<sup>1324</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1325</sup> P. Bourneuf, *La Société des Nations et la force internationale à Vilna (1920-1921): un projet précurseur pour le maintien de la paix*, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

<sup>1326</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 97.

<sup>1327</sup> AHN, H1681, 19.02.1921, Ministry of State Subsecretary Emilio Palacios to Spain’s representative in the League of Nations Council José María Quiñones de León.

<sup>1328</sup> *Ibidem*, 14.09.1921, Member of the League of Nations Military Commission in Vilna Enrique Uzquiano to Spain’s Minister of State Manuel Gonzalez Hontoria.

<sup>1329</sup> Quiñones de León informed the State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O’Lawlor) on March 1 that after the plebiscite negotiations with Poland’s and Lithuania’s representatives, Hymans and Balfour ultimately rejected the plebiscite idea and considered, sharing Quiñones’s view, a direct negotiation between Poles and Lithuanians mediated by Hymans aimed at finding a solution to the conflict. Bourgeois was unwilling to cancel the plebiscite Project, but finally he yielded and accepted that another solution had to be found.

with the two conflicted sides, instead. In addition, the League thanked the countries that were willing to contribute to the international contingent, as Spain's representative in the League reported to State Ministry, emphasising all the difficulties that the plebiscite project had faced<sup>1330</sup>. It is significant that Spain's Minister of State Marqués de Lema regarded this as a good decision in correspondence to Quiñones de León<sup>1331</sup>. Later, after the failure of two projects conceived by the Assembly's President, Belgian Paul Hymans—the first one conceived to create two Lithuanian cantons (one with its capital in Kowno and the other with Vilna as its capital) within a great Polish federation, and the second one consisting in giving autonomy to Central Lithuania within a Lithuanian state— on September 21, 1921 the Geneva-based institution deactivated any mediation work between Poles and Lithuanians<sup>1332</sup>. The causes of such abandonment – and of the previous cancellation of the plebiscite and international contingent – lie, on the one hand, on the Polish policy of accomplished facts driven by Żeligowski's coup, and on the other hand, on Lithuania's little influence capacity on the League's position, as well as on Lithuania's certainty that Poles would win any plebiscite that included the city of Vilna.

In Uzquino's view, expressed in February 1921, the Lithuanians should be pressured to accept the Hymans two-canton solution and Poland should be pressured to stop plotting to justify an eventual annexation of the disputed region to Poland. However, what is surprising in his argument is that only if non-Bolshevik Russia returned to exist and controlled the disputed area, which in his view was deeply *russified*, an ultimate solution for the Lithuanian problem could be found<sup>1333</sup>.

## Conclusions

In the Spanish press the impact of the Vilna question, particularly concerning the Spanish troops that had to be sent as part of a League of Nations' contingent, were extremely significant. These echoes of the conflict were, logically, also very important in Spain's

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*Ibidem*, 1.03.1921. Spain's representative in the League of Nations council to Spain's Minister of State Marqués de Lema.

<sup>1330</sup> *Ibidem*, 4.03.1921, Spain's representative in the League of Nations Council, Quiñones de León to Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor).

<sup>1331</sup> *Ibidem*, 5.03.1921, Spain's Minister of State Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro y O'Lawlor) to Spain's representative in the League of Nations Council, Quiñones de León.

<sup>1332</sup> P. Łosowski, *Konflikt polsko-litewski 1918-1920*, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

<sup>1333</sup> AHN, H1681, 19.02.1921, Ministry of State Subsecretary Emilio Palacios to Spain's representative in the League of Nations Council José María Quiñones de León.

diplomacy because the contingent question affected Spain's State Ministry directly. Spain was at that time a non-permanent member of the League and wanted and was very involved in the new organisation. This is why the Spanish government accepted to send troops to Vilna as part of an international contingent, along with French, Belgian, British, Dutch and Scandinavian army units. The contingent's mission was to guarantee that a plebiscite could take place in the conflict zone. The Spanish government's decision led to numerous critical reactions to such a decision in the Spanish press.

It may also be concluded that overall Spain's diplomacy, very well informed thanks to Quinones de Leon's involvement in the League of Nations and Gutiérrez de Agüera's interpretations from Warsaw, had a less critical view on Poland's interests and attitude in the conflict with Lithuania than the Spanish press had. For instance, it is important to highlight that Spain's Ministry of State forwarded the note from the Polish Legation in Madrid on Żeligowski's "rebellion" to the Spanish press, as requested by Polish minister in Madrid Skrzyński, and the note was published in the Spanish press the following day. However, Gutiérrez de Agüera assessed very negatively both Żeligowski's occupation of Vilna and the deceiving rebellion justification used by Poland, even though the Spanish diplomat did not question that Vilna should belong to Poland.

The reports from Spain's top diplomat in Warsaw show that his interpretations, apparently strongly influenced by other foreign diplomats in Warsaw, of the conflict's status and potential solutions, were quickly changing and sometimes even fell into contradictions. This is not surprising if we take the conflict's complexity, in the diplomatic field, into consideration, and if we also take the changes in the military situation of the intertwined Polish-Lithuanian and Polish-Bolshevik conflicts into account.

In Spain's State Ministry, the contingent and the plebiscite that the League intended to organize were also regarded as a Spanish project. However, in the diplomatic correspondence it is clearly seen that Francisco Gutiérrez de Agüera was very sceptical about the plebiscite and about the possibility of reaching a negotiated peace between Poland and Lithuania, which in his view would be the best solution. Quinones de Leon was also sceptical about the plebiscite project once the negotiations about it with Polish and Lithuanian representatives directed by the League of Nations started in Geneva. Spain's State Minister Marqués de Lema, thanks to Quinones's explanations, understood in March 1921 that the plebiscite was not possible and regarded an attempt of direct Polish-Lithuanian negotiation of the disputed region's future as a good decision.

Żeligowski's "rebellion" indeed discredited Poland's territorial ambitions and the country's image in Spain, in a moment that was crucial for the political and territorial construction of the reborn Polish state. A depiction of an imperialist, militarized Poland, away from the diplomatic channels and serving French interests was transmitted to the Spanish society by means of the press. In addition, Spain's approved participation in the contingent and the League of Nations' management of the conflict damaged the new international organization's image in the Spain's press and society.

When focusing on the mentioned facts, it seems not only that marshal Piłsudski did not believe in the multilateral solutions of the League of Nations, but also that Żeligowski's operation was outside of any legality and broke the peace agreement reached by Poles and Lithuanians in Suwałki. However, in several Spanish newspapers Poland was accused of imperialism for including in its territory a city whose population was, into a great extent, Polish. We find in international and Polish historiography different interpretations about Polish governance on the *kresy wschodnie* in the first years of the interwar period<sup>1334</sup>, some of which regard it as imperialist or colonialist<sup>1335</sup>, but in Vilna's case the Spanish criticism of the region's Polish occupation would be more easily justifiable if the focus was placed on the means rather than on the action's background and goals.

As a matter of fact, the critical stand by part of the Spanish press towards the Polish diplomatic and military actions in this conflict was caused mostly by a partial Spanish antagonism to France's domain in the new post-war European geopolitical order, rather than by sympathy for the Lithuanian cause or by an opposition to Poland's territorial ambitions. In other words, among many Spanish press editors and contributors, there was no special interest in the territorial conflict as such, but the real interest lied in the role played around it by Spain, the European Powers and the League. This aspect had way more importance than the fact that Russian bolshevism supported the Lithuanians and could be greatly benefited from excluding Vilna from Poland.

Spain's direct role in the European chessboard regarding the Polish-Lithuanian dispute was, eventually limited—especially if we take into account that in the end the League's international contingent was not sent to Vilna— and was reflected mainly on the Spanish

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<sup>1334</sup> See: N. Davies, *Orzeł biały, Czerwona Gwiazda: wojna polsko-bolszewicka 1919-1920*, op. cit.; A. Nowak, *Pierwsza zdrada Zachodu 1920 – zapomniany appeasement*, op. cit.

<sup>1335</sup> This view is found, for instance, in: J. Böhler, *Wojna domowa. Nowe spojrzenie na odrodzenie Polski*, op. cit., p. 258-269.



involvement in the committee and the two commissions created by the League of Nations to address the Vilna question.

### Chapter 3 Conclusions

A larger attention to military, strategic and geopolitical aspects is visible in the Spanish comments regarding the Eastern border conflicts than in the case of the Western border conflicts. In addition, the largest criticism in the Spanish press regarding Poland's eastern policy and conflicts is seen in regard to the Polish-Lithuanian conflict over Vilna. This criticism was not only focused on Poland but above all, on the Entente, the League of Nations and France.

Predominantly, Spanish commentators wanted Poland to defeat the Bolsheviks and saw Poland more entitled to gain territories in the East against the Bolsheviks than to take Vilna over by force during the Polish-Lithuanian conflict. Moreover, most Spanish commentators reflected on the complex and diverse ethnographic reality of Eastern Galicia but clear comments are seen in the examined primary sources in favour of Poland's control of the disputed region.

Poland, one could argue, in a way, won the three wars to control the Eastern borderlands, against Ukraine, Soviet Russia and Lithuania. This reality of a quite strong Poland in the east after the Battle of Warsaw made that some Spanish press editors and international affairs commentators not only perceived a new Poland that had become a bulwark between Germany and Russia, what Germanophiles did not like, but also saw a collision between Poland's ambitions and France's and especially England's geopolitical and economic preferences, plans, and ambitions in Eastern Europe.

# CHAPTER 4: SPAIN AND THE POLISH-JEWISH QUESTION 1918-1921

## Introduction: historical and ethnographic background

The questions around anti-Jewish violence episodes in Poland (parallel in time with the beginnings of Polish independence), around the insertion and fitting of the Polish Jews that used to live under Austrian and Russian rule in the new Polish state, and around these Jews' role in the Great War, as well as their social reality, generated a noticeable interest in Spain. This impact of these questions was way larger in the Spanish press than in Spain's diplomacy. Most comments on the Polish-Jewish question within the analysed time period of this thesis, appeared in late 1918 and throughout 1919, in the early life of the reborn Polish state. Fewer comments on Polish-Jewish affairs are seen in 1920 and early 1921.

When looking at the historical background it is important to highlight that both Spain and Poland had a history of Jewish civilization, although in the Spanish case this community ended with the 1492 expulsion, whereas in Poland Jews had already been living for centuries and at the examined time period in this research work, Polish Jews represented a very important percentage of Polish population, being Poland the most Jewish state in the world from many points of view.

The Jewish element has also been something that Spain and Poland shared and that is essential when understanding the relations between both countries and the Spanish perspectives on Polish history and reality. Polish historian Malgorzata Nalewajko explains that, interestingly enough, many accounts on Polish Jews appear in chronicles written by Spanish travellers to Poland throughout the centuries and the general observed trend is that these Spaniards described Polish Jews rather negatively. Nalewajko also brings attention to the fact that a small number of Sephardic Jews settled in Poland in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries but some of them ended up playing important roles in Polish society<sup>1336</sup>.

Sofía Casanova was the Spanish press contributor and correspondent who most often referred to Polish Jews in the examined period. The Spanish writer and correspondent used many lines in her articles on 'ABC' to describe the appearance, behaviours, lifestyle, traditions

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<sup>1336</sup> M. Nalewajko, *Episodios judíos en la imagen mutua de España y Polonia* [in]: "Itinerarios. Revista de estudios lingüísticos, literarios, históricos y antropológicos", nr. 16, p. 181-200, Warsaw 2012, p. 182.

and above all the mindset of the Polish Jews, emphasizing the differences across their different social groups or classes. It is also worth noting that Spanish-Polish writer, diplomat and businessman Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda did not address the Polish-Jewish question in his articles about current Polish affairs published on 'La Correspondencia de España' (and other newspapers into a lesser extent) in 1919, 1920 and 1921 as deep as other topics. He commented on the situation of Polish Jews in detail only in part of an article published on 'La Correspondencia de España' on July 16, 1919 (and written also in July). Among other aspects of the Polish Jewish question that Granzów commented, and which will also be analysed in detail other sections below, he stated the status of Jews within the new Polish state would not generate a problem in terms of religious rights, language rights especial education needs and citizenship. In addition, Granzów stated it would be better if Poland managed these questions on its own and there was no intervention in them by the allied powers or the League of Nations, because in case of a foreign intervention in the minority rights question in Poland, Jews would look for or be placed under the protection of the foreign power instead of the Polish state, and in that case Jews could be perceived by the rest of Poles as "half-foreigners" and other Poles would not agree on Jews enjoying the same citizenship rights as they did, what would place Polish Jews in a "difficult situation"<sup>1337</sup>.

In regard to Granzów's views about Jews, it is also worth highlighting that on a text about the diplomatic games around the Polish-Soviet War, published on February 19, 1920 he wrote a comment that can be interpreted either as stereotypical or antisemitic: "Poland's allies love her as a sister, but along with this love they settle her accounts as if they were Jews"<sup>1338</sup>.

However, Granzów de la Cerda's book about Poland in Spanish published in 1919 contained a section titled "The Israelites" about the historical background of Jewish life in Poland and the relations between Poles and Jews. In the book, Granzów, after writing about Casimire the Great and the development of Jewish life in Poland throughout the centuries, argued that Jews took part in Polish insurrections and were on the Polish side, but this changed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when Polish Jews became "anti-Polish" due to the arrival of a million Jews from Russia, and also due to "the anti-Polish propaganda made among them by the Russian, German and Austrian governments", because they "preferred to do business with the oppressor than with the country's locals", a soaring Jewish "egoist nationalism". Granzow added this was visible in the 1897 census in Russia in which a low percentage of

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<sup>1337</sup> "Polacos, alemanes y judíos, II", 'La Correspondencia de España', 16.07.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1338</sup> "Desde Polonia, La Paz o la Guerra", 'La Correspondencia de España', 19.02.1920, p. 1.

Polish Jews declared themselves as Polish. This led, as Granzów accounted in his book, to the Poles establishing economic “barriers” between Jews and non-Jews in Poland, but these barriers had to be lifted, otherwise the Polish economy would suffer the consequences. The Polish-Spanish author added that the situation got more tense between Poles and Jews when in the Duma elections the Jews obtained their own deputy from Warsaw, and then, as a reaction, Poles boycotted Jewish products. Granzów concluded that the Jews were the first that created conflict with the other part but Poles didn’t behave “gentlemanly” with them afterwards, even though, Granzów, into a certain extent, justified the boycott against Jews when he claimed “they couldn’t accept that in the middle of all their misfortunes and miseries, the Jews would be the bosses of Poland”<sup>1339</sup>.

On the same newspaper, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, a leading Spanish intellectual and press contributor of the time, Ramiro de Maeztu, from London, analysed the Polish Jewish question in-depth in the global context of the Jewish question. It is worth mentioning in relation to Jewish history and tradition in general, that he stated that Jews believed themselves to be the chosen nation but in reality they weren’t it but acted as if they were<sup>1340</sup>.

Violence against Jews in the first months of Polish independence was one of the most covered topics in the Spanish press of the time regarding the Polish-Jewish question but not the only one. Many of the texts that touched the Polish-Jewish question made references to Zionism, autonomy, assimilation and isolation as different solutions and realities for these Jews and others referred to the needed Polish legal framework to properly host the Jews in the Polish state. Other texts focused on socio-economic aspects of the Jewish communities in Poland. Others simply attempted to give an answer to a basic question: How many Jews were there in the new Poland at the beginning of its existence in the aftermath of the Great War?

Precisely, Ramiro de Maeztu explained to his readers than in the new Polish state there were “three million Jews”, and also that Jews were “a 15% of the Polish population” which was 20 million in total, he wrote<sup>1341</sup>. Casanova highlighted the fact that “out of 12 million Israelites spread around the earth, 4 are in Poland”, adding 400.000 lived in Warsaw, where they represented almost half of the population<sup>1342</sup>. Thus, Casanova counted one million more of Jews

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<sup>1339</sup> C. Granzów de la Cerda. *Polonia. Su gloria en el pasado, su martirio y su resurrección*, op. cit., p. 181-183.

<sup>1340</sup> “Israel, la insoluble (de nuestro redactor en Londres)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.05.1919, p. 1-2.

<sup>1341</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1342</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio, la cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p. 3.

in Poland than her compatriot in London. Maeztu also claimed that “Poland will be the nation in the world where there are proportionally more Jews[.]”<sup>1343</sup>.

When checking statistics about the amount of Jews at the beginning of the Second Polish Republic in scientific literature, we can read that in the data provided by the 1921 census, presented by Kaczmarek, a 7.8% of the population taking part in the survey regarded themselves as members of the Jewish national minority<sup>1344</sup>. Taking into account the total population figure given by the census and reported by Kaczmarek of 27,177,000 (which didn't take into account either Upper Silesia or the Vilna region)<sup>1345</sup>, we obtain a figure of approximately 2,120,000 self-declared Jews in 1921 Poland. When comparing it with the census data, Sofía Casanova's figure of 4 million might seem very exaggerated, and Maeztu's figure a bit exaggerated, but it has to be explained relating to the same problematic language/ethnicity/religion reality of other plebiscites this research work has referred to that probably many Poles of Jewish faith or Jewish origins marked themselves as Polish and not as Jews in the 1921 general census, and Casanova's number in that case, if considering all these Jews as Poles, would still be far from reality but not as exaggerated as one might think at first and De Maeztu's figure would be closer to Poland's true ethnographic reality. However, Polish historians Czesław Brzoza and Andrzej Sowa discard the credibility of the 1921 general census and precisely explain that in this census:

“[...]in which[ participants] were asked about nationality, didn't take into account the whole country, (the Vilna region and Upper Silesia were still outside its recognised borders) and was because of political reasons partially boycotted by the Ukrainian population in Eastern Lesser Poland, and in addition, it was performed in a moment when the strong repatriation movement was barely nearing its end. Its largest minus was the fact that many people, and even part of the census commissaires, didn't differentiate the concepts of “citizenship” and “nationality”. Out of this for instance, a

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<sup>1343</sup> “Israel, la insoluble (de nuestro redactor en Londres)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.05.1919, p. 1-2.

<sup>1344</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989, op. cit.*, p.130. The author obtained the data from: *Historia Polski w liczbach. Państwo I społeczeństwo*, t.1, GUS, Warszawa 2003, tab. (373),” *Ludność według narodowości na podstawie spisu 1921 r.*”, p. 382.

<sup>1345</sup> R. Kaczmarek, *Historia Polski 1914-1989, op. cit.*, p.129.

large group of population appeared declaring Jewish faith and Polish nationality at the same time”<sup>1346</sup>.

The authors claim that most scholars dealing with the topic of national minorities in Interwar Poland agree that the true percentage and number of ethnic Poles in the new Polish state was lower than what the census statistics showed, and these scholars generally place the true figure around 65% instead of 70% of ethnic Poles in reborn Poland<sup>1347</sup>.

The role of Jews in the Great War worldwide, and especially this of the richest and most powerful ones, was also often commented by Spanish press contributors in the aftermath of the conflict. For instance, on May 31, 1919 Sofía Casanova referred to this question as well, and argued that Jews were accused of taking advantage of the Great War to get richer, but she wrote that not only Jews could be accused of that, but also, for instance, many Spaniards<sup>1348</sup>. She referred to the fact that in neutral Spain many businessmen got wealthy thanks to the war.

### Spain and the Jews in the aftermath of the Great War

Overall, the Jewish question was a trendy topic in Spain in the aftermath of the Great War, as we see when we look at the large amount of press articles dedicated to it in the most influential Spanish newspapers. In addition, it must be highlighted that the Polish-Jewish question started being discussed more often in Spain because of the news and reactions on the anti-Jewish violence in Poland in late 1918, which will be analysed below in this chapter.

Nevertheless, the Jewish question, generally speaking, had already become very current and topical within Spanish politics during the Great War and it was current after the war, regardless of what happened in Poland, although this country was perceived as the home of many Jews. In relation to that, it must be explained that on May 29, 1919 on ‘La Correspondencia de España’, on a text written on May 23, Ramiro de Maeztu claimed: “[...]If Poles shared the taste of doctor Pulido, they would be the happiest nation on earth. They don’t

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<sup>1346</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945*, Kraków 2006, p. 119. Original quoted text: „[...] w którym pytano o narodowość, nie objął całego państwa (Wileńszczyzna i Górny Śląsk nadal były poza jego uznanymi granicami) i został ze względów politycznych częściowo zbojkotowany przez ludność ukraińską w Małopolsce Wschodniej, a ponadto był przeprowadzony w czasie, gdy silny ruch repatriacyjny dopiero zbliżał się do końca. Jego największym minusem był fakt, że wiele osób, a nawet część komisarzy spisowych, nie rozróżniało pojęć „obywatelstwo” i „narodowość”. Stąd np. pojawiła się bardzo duża grupa ludności deklarująca wyznanie mojżeszowe i równocześnie narodowość polską”.

<sup>1347</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 120.

<sup>1348</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía XII”, ‘ABC’, 31.05.1919, p. 4-5.

share them unfortunately”<sup>1349</sup>. The comment meant Poles would be very happy if they were very keen on Jews (what was not the case, in Maeztu’s view) because they had so many of them. However, what really matters at this point is that by “doctor Pulido”, Ramiro de Maeztu referred to Ángel Pulido, a Spanish physician and politician who went down in to history as the initiator of an ambitious pro-Semitic campaign in early 20th century Spain. This campaign did not occur at this particular period by chance and was also a consequence of the specific socio-political reality Spain experienced, during the so-called monarchical Bourbon restoration period. In this sense, it must be reminded that since the 1898 defeat in the Spanish-American war until the Great War, the *regeneracionismo*<sup>1350</sup> movement and reformist ambitions advocated by certain Spanish leaders were very important in Spanish politics<sup>1351</sup>. According to author Michael Alpert, the 1898 disaster in the Spanish-North American War:

“stimulated a broad cultural movement seeking the regeneration of the nation. One suggested solution was to rediscover and make better use of the Spanish-speaking Sephardim of North Africa, the Balkans and Turkey”<sup>1352</sup>.

This intellectual and political movement in early 20t century Spain has gone down into history as pro-sephardism or philosephardism, and Pulido was its main initiator and booster. How did all start? As Alpert explains, after contacts with Sephardic Jews in cruises along the Danube river in the Balkans in 1883 and 1903, and especially after getting to know Enrique Bejarano, Bucharest’s Jewish school principal, Ángel Pulido “devoted most of the rest of his life to advancing the cause of reconciliation between Spain and the Spanish-speaking Jewish populations of the Near East [,Northern Africa and the Balkans]”<sup>1353</sup>. Alpert adds that “Pulido conducted a campaign to make Spanish public opinion at least aware of the Spanish-speaking Jews, and of the economic potential Spain was wasting by not maintaining active relations with them”<sup>1354</sup>.

Alpert also claims that, despite Pulido’s campaign in the first two decades of the 20th century to create ties with Sephardic Spanish-speaking Jews in the Balkans, Northern Africa

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<sup>1349</sup> “Israel, la insoluble (de nuestro redactor en Londres)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.05.1919, p. 1-2.

<sup>1350</sup> Regeneracionismo: Spanish political movement born as a result of the 1898 defeat aiming at changing Spain by means of reforms in politics, economy and education. Joaquin Costa was one its leaders.

<sup>1351</sup> See: S. Juliá, *Una monarquía liberal que termina en dictadura militar 1899-1930*, *op. cit.*, p. 451-461; T. Milkowski, P. Machcewicz, *Historia Hiszpanii*, *op. cit.*, p. 283-290.

<sup>1352</sup> M. Alpert, *Dr Angel Pulido and Philo–Sephardism in Spain*, [in]: “Jewish Historical Studies”, Vol. 40, London 2005, p. 105–119; p. 112. Accessed on: JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24027026> [1.04.2023]

<sup>1353</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 112-113.

<sup>1354</sup> *Ibidem*, p.113.

and the Near East, the Spanish government did not do much to support the Sephardic Jews in those regions, giving examples from the Great War period. However, the same author also explains that “in Spain, at a cultural level, the highest authorities were helpful [with Jews]” and adds that “on February 10, 1920 Alfonso XIII received the leaders of the Asociaciones Hispano-Hebreas [Spanish-Hebrew Associations] of the Moroccan cities [In the Spanish protectorate] of Tetuan, Tangiers, Larache, Arcila, Alcazarquivir and Ceuta”. Alpert also explains that Pulido was conceded a meeting with Alfonso XIII, taking place on March 25, 1920. As this author accounts, “Pulido spoke [to the King] about the aggrandizement of Spain through the agency of the Jews of Spanish Morocco”<sup>1355</sup>.

Alpert also mentions Pulido’s contacts with Moroccan Jews in 1921 in his trip to that country and highlights that Pulido was very disappointed with the results obtained by means of his philosemitic campaign in Spain. Namely, Alpert explains that in 1923 Pulido wrote:

“Twenty years persevering with these ideas show that they are ever more sensible and practical... and only lack of interest, ignorance, the instability of our governments, and the lack of statesmen in Spain, explain how this programme has not been completed and why we are today as we were at the beginning”<sup>1356</sup>.

On to another topic concerning Spain and the Jewish question in the aftermath of the Great War, it is also worth explaining that on January 11, 1919, Abraham Shalom Yahuda, as a representative of Spain’s Jewish community, sent a letter to Spain’s Homeland Minister Amalio Gimeno reporting that among Jewish families in Spain with Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Lithuanian and Estonian origins, there was fear to be expelled from Spain. This was due to the news that these Jewish families read in the press about the Spanish government’s intention to expel all Russians from the country, because of Bolshevik activism. Yahuda argued that if this expulsion was applied, innocents would pay for the subversive actions performed by others, and he was convinced the government would not act that way. To the letter, he was attaching a list of Jewish families, which he was sure were never involved in pro-Bolshevik subversive actions. In his letter, Yahuda also stated that most of these Jewish families were no longer Russian citizens, that they “were willing to abandon Spain once peace would be signed”, and that in reality they were Zionists who wanted the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine as promised by Great Britain [Balfour Declaration] and the Allies<sup>1357</sup>. It is worth remarking here,

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<sup>1355</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 116.

<sup>1356</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 117.

<sup>1357</sup> AHN, H2649, 11.01.1919, A.S. Yahuda, to Spain’s Homeland Minister Amalio Gimeno.



as an interpretation of Yahuda's words, that among these Jewish families in Spain, there were Polish Jews who were mostly Zionist, no longer identified themselves as Russians and had the intention to abandon Spain probably for Palestine. These Polish Jews did not intend to return to Poland.

About Abraham Yahuda's figure, Alpert explains that: "Abraham Shalom Yahuda [was] a noted Jewish orientalist who came from a family which had lived in the Spanish-speaking area of Jerusalem. Yahuda was invited in 1913 to deliver a set of lectures on the Jewish contribution to thought and culture and later to occupy the newly created Chair of Rabbinic Language and Literature at Madrid University"<sup>1358</sup>. Alpert adds that Yahuda "helped organize the Madrid Jewish Community, swelled by people stranded by the war, including Max Nordau and Chaim Weizman.[...] Yahuda established the first post-expulsion [of Jews from Spain in 1492] synagogue in the capital[...]"<sup>1359</sup>. This gives an idea of the important role this person had for the Jews in Madrid. Yahuda will be mentioned again below when discussing reactions in Spain to the wave of anti-Jewish violence in Poland in late 1918 and in 1919.

Onto the topic of connections between Spain and the Jewish question, it is worth adding, even if it has an anecdotal character, that Sofía Casanova explained that the Jews in the Cracow "ghetto" [Kazimierz] did not say much to her, especially men, but they asked her questions about Spain, and she was surprised to see that Cracow Jews believed that in Spain the Inquisition was still functioning. Casanova also explained that a young Jewish girl told her that she related Spain to celebrated [Muslim Arab leader] Almanzor<sup>1360</sup> and to [renowned Sephardic Jew] Maimonides<sup>1361</sup>. However, Casanova wrote that the girl still thought about Spain negatively due to "the legendary wrath towards the country that expelled the Hebrews". The Spanish writer explained how she tried, without much success, to convince Jewish women in Cracow's Jewish quarter that Spain was now a very different country from what they thought it was<sup>1362</sup>:

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<sup>1358</sup> M. Alpert, "Dr Angel Pulido and Philo-Sephardism in Spain", *op. cit.*, p. 116.

<sup>1359</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1360</sup> 938-1002. "Chamberlain (hājib) of the Cordovan caliph Hisām II and ruler and absolute lord of Al-Andalus between the years 981-1002". <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/993> [accessed 28.04.2023]

<sup>1361</sup> 1138-1204. Renowned Jewish philosopher and rabbi from Cordoba in Al-Andalus. <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/26970> [accessed 28.04.2023]

<sup>1362</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio, la cuestión judía XIII", 'ABC', 15.06.1919, p. 6.

“Go to Spain, I insisted, wishing they would clear from their ideas and from their feelings obscurantism, and the antipathy against us. Go to Spain and you will see how beautiful and liberal my country is. Never! Some of them replied to me. A curse will fall upon who among us step foot in there. This is what our prophets and our maestros write”<sup>1363</sup>.

### Anti-Jewish violence in Poland and its consequences on Poland’s reputation in Spain

References in the Spanish press to violence against Jews in the Polish lands appeared already during the Great War, (in this case references to attacks on Jews committed mostly by Russians and Germans), and these appeared as well after the global conflict had ended. Within Spanish diplomacy, during the Great War period, only Spain’s Ambassador in Petrograd Count of Cartagena referred to violence against Jews in the region, when on April 2, 1915 he wrote that:

“[In Russian Poland and in Galicia] even more cruel has been the conduct of the Russian authorities towards the Jews[...]. Most of them have been victims of the hatred and intolerance of the Russian civil and military authorities”<sup>1364</sup>.

The same idea was conveyed by Sofía Casanova after the war, when she claimed that the worst treatment of the Jews took place under the Russian Empire, highlighting in particular the spring 1915 persecution of Jews<sup>1365</sup>. Casanova also explained that in the Great War, Jews who functioned as spies “delivered” Poles and Russians to the German occupier and both Russians, Poles, as well as Germans “committed atrocities against the Semitics”<sup>1366</sup>. In addition, Casanova also mentioned the Jews were accused in Russia of not having fought with courage under the imperial army, but she argued this was not true because during the conflict she saw many wounded Russian Jewish soldiers<sup>1367</sup>.

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<sup>1363</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “¡Id a España!-insistía yo, anhelando desvanecen de sus ideas y de sus sentimientos el obscurantismo y la antipatía hacia nosotros. ¡Id a España!, veréis qué hermoso y qué liberal es mi país! ¡Nunca! ¡Jamás! Me respondían algunas. La maldición caerá sobre quien de nosotros ponga allí su planta. Así lo escriben nuestros profetas y nuestros maestros”.

<sup>1364</sup> AHN, H2993, 2.04.1915, Spain’s ambassador in Petrograd Count of Cartagena Aníbal Morillo y Pérez del Villar to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema (Salvador Bermúdez de Castro O’Lawlor). Original quoted text: “Más cruel ha sido todavía la conducta de las autoridades rusas para con los judíos[...]Han sido la mayor parte de ellos víctimas del odio y de la intolerancia de las autoridades civiles y militares rusas”.

<sup>1365</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio, la cuestión judía XII”, ABC, 31.05.1919, p. 4-5.

<sup>1366</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio, la cuestión judía VIII, ABC, 18.05.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1367</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía X”, ABC, 27.05.1919, p. 3.

Moreover, Casanova stated “Poland’s and Russia’s Israelites have suffered a lot, if not more than, at least the same as the other men in war, and have suffered unheard cruelties”, and she also explained that the Russian soldiers in Warsaw applied antisemitic policies, requested by “the despotic viceroy” until the war, and this changed with the German occupation of Russian Poland, which improved the situation of the local Jews. However, she claimed that she had also seen Germans behaving brutally against Jews in the Vienna train station in Warsaw [Dworzec Wiedeński] during the German occupation of the city. The Spanish journalist also claimed that:

“Jews mixed in the military mobs have looted and burned villages and towns, particularly on the fronts of Podolia, Galicia and White Russia, but also in those same [villages and towns] and others, their farms and their ghettos were pillaged and burned and in their ghettos their women and children were murdered in terrible pogroms”<sup>1368</sup>.

Casanova not only focused on Jews in Russian Poland, but also mentioned Galician Jews having suffered a lot in the war, both after the summer 1914 Russian occupation of Eastern Galicia and when Central Powers recovered their territories for Austria-Hungary in June 1915. So, as the Spanish writer pointed out, Galician Jews were oppressed by both sides of the war<sup>1369</sup>.

In addition, Casanova argued that Russia committed much worse atrocities against Jews than Poland did, focusing on the events taking place in Moscow in the spring of 1915, and claimed that Poland was presented as the enemy of Jews and as an antisemite “weapon” by those talking about the pogroms, about which there was much talk, in her view. On to another matter, she also unblamed Jews of being one of the main responsible parts for the war outburst, even though she claimed that Jews took advantage of the global conflict<sup>1370</sup>.

Leaving the Great War period aside, in regard to anti-Jewish violence in the aftermath of the global conflict in the new Polish state, it must be explained, first of all, that many news, mostly in the form of foreign telegraphic or radiographic press notes, since late November 1918 appeared in the Spanish press about Jews being attacked in Poland. Firstly, there were news about the attack that the Jewish community in Lwów suffered. For instance, on the November

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<sup>1368</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio, la cuestión judía XIV, ‘ABC’, 17.06.1919, p. 3. Original quoted text in Spanish: “Mezclados los judíos en las turbas militares, han saqueado, han incendiado aldeas y pueblos, particularmente en los frentes de Podolia, Galitzia y Rusia blanca; pero también en esos y en otros fueron pilladas e incendiadas sus haciendas, sus ghettos y asesinadas en pogroms terribles sus mujeres y criaturas”.

<sup>1369</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio, la cuestión judía XII”, ‘ABC’, 31.05.1919, p. 4-5.

<sup>1370</sup> *Ibidem*.

30, 1918 'La Acción''s issue we read a note from Nauen radio station (near Berlin) dated on November 29 and headlined "Killing of Jews". The note reported that:

"Details have been received about the killing of Jews in Lemberg. At the beginning the Polish legionists limited themselves to kill the few Jews in the streets of the Jewish quarter. Later they started to siege them and to continue the killing in their houses. Few hundreds of Jews tried to shelter themselves in the synagogue, expecting that the sacred character of the house of God would be respected. But the Polish legionists surrounded the building and set it on fire. All those who tried to save themselves through the windows were shot to death. The synagogue was completely destroyed by the fire, dying in it all the Jews. Next, Poles repeated this procedure at a large scale, surrounding entire Jewish quarters and turning them into a sea of flames"<sup>1371</sup>.

Another example of this is seen in a press note from Copenhagen published on December 1, 1918 on 'La Correspondencia de España', headlined "The events in Lemberg" and subtitled "Over thousand dead Jews", making reference to the correspondent of a Danish newspaper in Berlin as the source reporting that 1.100 Jews were killed, as well as the burning of the Synagogue with Jews inside<sup>1372</sup>. Another almost exact note appeared on 'El Sol' on the same day, but this newspaper used the headline "murders of Jews in Lemberg"<sup>1373</sup>. The figure of over 1000 Jewish deaths in Lwów given in this press note seems extremely exaggerated if we take into account what Polish historian Zbigniew Zaporowski explains: the Morgenthau Commission reported 64 Jews died during the pogrom, the local newspaper 'Kurier Lwowski' reported 23 Jewish deaths, commander of the defence of Lwów supposedly reported 35 Jewish deaths, the Jewish Rescue Committee in Lwów reported 72, the Extraordinary Government Investigative Commission for the clarification of the Lwów violent incidents (Nadzwyczajnej Rządowej Komisji Śledczej) under the supervision of a Poland's Supreme Court judge established that "about 50 Jews" were murdered, and the highest figure, 150 Jewish deaths, was

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<sup>1371</sup> "Matanza de judíos", 'La Acción', 30.11.1918, p. 3. Original quoted text: "Se han recibido detalles sobre la matanza de judíos en Lemberg. Al principio se limitaron legionarios polacos a matar los pocos judíos en las calles del barrio judío. Más tarde comenzaron a cercarlos y seguir la matanza en las casas. Varios cientos de judíos trataron de refugiarse en la Sinagoga, esperando que se respetara lo sagrado de la Casa de Dios. Pero los legionarios polacos rodearon el edificio, prendiéndole fuego. Todo el que tratara de salvarse por las ventanas fue muerto a tiros. La Sinagoga quedó completamente destruida por el fuego, pereciendo en él todos los judíos. A continuación repitieron los polacos este proceder en gran escala, rodeando barrios enteros de judíos y convirtiéndolos en un mar de llamas".

<sup>1372</sup> "Los sucesos de Lemberg. Más de mil judíos muertos", 'La Correspondencia de España', 1.12.1918, p. 1.

<sup>1373</sup> "Asesinatos de judíos en Lemberg", 'El Sol', 1.12.1918, p. 2.

given in “a report written by envoys of Poland’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs”, found by Polish historian Jerzy Tomaszewski, as Zaporowski explains. The author adds that the local police reported 44 deaths, including 11 “Christians” as a result of the November 22-24 events and also argues that “establishing the exact figure” of Jewish deaths in the Lwów pogrom is “difficult” due to the problem with the chosen dates (there was anti-Jewish violence in Poland before and after 22-24 November), the category given to Jewish militia’s deaths during the fight with Polish soldiers on November 22 and the fact there were also non-Jewish victims during these violent events<sup>1374</sup>.

Another radiogram-based press note on the Lemberg pogrom was published on ‘La Acción’, on December 1, 1918 with the headline: “Horrible crimes. The killing of Jews. Political causes”, and it quoted the German newspaper ‘Berliner Tageblatt’ reporting that:

“It was not about excesses on the part of a looting soldiery, but rather systematic national terrorism for political purposes. The pogroms stopped when the city’s Jews declared through their representatives that they considered themselves Poles. For decades the fiction has been promoted that Ukrainian Eastern Galicia is Polish, counting Jews as Poles. But with the exception of the authorities and those who depend on them, there are no Poles in the cities of eastern Galicia. In the recent fights the Jews declared themselves neutral. The Poles could never justify their claims to eastern Galicia if they recognized the neutrality of the Jews in the Polish-Ukrainian conflict. Pogroms aim to quash neutrality protests by Jews”<sup>1375</sup>.

Another foreign press note on ‘La Época’, also published on December 1, 1918 included the sub-headline “Persecutions of Jews by the Poles”<sup>1376</sup>. On December 2, for another press note published on this question, ‘El Heraldo’, under the headline “the persecution of the Jews”, used the sub-headline “Quarters destroyed. Incendiary bombs. Thousands of victims”. The note reported that during the pogroms in Lemberg “yesterday and last Friday”, a series of

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<sup>1374</sup> Z. Zaporowski, *Ofiary rozruchów i rabunków we Lwowie 22–24 listopada 1918 roku w świetle ustaleń lwowskiej Dyrekcji Policji*, „Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość”, nr. 31, Warszawa 2018, p. 465–471.

<sup>1375</sup> “Crímenes horrendos. Las matanzas de judíos. Causas políticas”, ‘La Acción’, 1.12.1918, p. 1. Original quoted text: “No se trató de excesos por parte de una soldadesca saqueadora, sino de un terrorismo sistemático nacional con fines políticos. Los pogroms cesaron en el momento en que los judíos de la ciudad declararan por boca de sus representantes que se consideraban polacos. Desde décadas es fomentada la ficción de que la Galicia oriental ucraniana sea polaca, contándose a los judíos como polacos. Pero con excepción de las autoridades y de los que de ellas dependen, no hay polacos en las ciudades de la Galitzia oriental. En las recientes luchas entre polacos y ucranianos habidas en la Galitzia oriental, los judíos se declararon neutrales. Los polacos no podrán jamás justificar sus pretensiones referentes a la Galitzia oriental si reconocieran la neutralidad de los judíos en el conflicto polacoucraniano. Los pogroms tienen como objetivo anular las protestas de neutralidad por parte de los judíos”.

<sup>1376</sup> “Las nuevas nacionalidades. Persecuciones de judíos por los polacos”, ‘La Época’, 1.12.1918, p. 2.

“incendiary bombs were launched over 600 houses resulting in thousands of dead Israelites”<sup>1377</sup>. On December 4 ‘La Acción’ used the headline “The killing of Jews. It was the Poles who did it”, for a press note in which we can read:

“The Socialist Worker association of the Jews telegraphed to [...] that the pogroms in Galicia and in Poland, as well as the well-organized horrible killing in Lemberg were carried out by Polish legionists with true cruelty and with the visible approbation of the command and satisfaction of the Polish neighbours”<sup>1378</sup>.

Those, among Spanish newspapers’ editors and press contributors, who, after having analysed these foreign radiotelegraphic press notes about anti-Jewish violence in Poland, believed in their credibility were Germanophile ‘La Acción’<sup>1379</sup> and the weekly ‘España’<sup>1380</sup>, while those who believed these news were false or not credible, a fruit of propaganda, were, for instance, ‘ABC’’s correspondent Sofía Casanova, who believed there was a defamatory campaign against Poland<sup>1381</sup> and that in Lwów, in reality, first there was a two-sided fight between Poles and Jews<sup>1382</sup>, ‘El Progreso’, which supported the explanation given by the Polish National Committee<sup>1383</sup> and ‘La Correspondencia de España’, which saw a German propaganda hand behind the published pieces of information, due to German interest in other countries reacting against the Polish state, after Germany had lost territories in Poland’s favour<sup>1384</sup>. In addition, it is worth commenting that much later, during the peak moment of the Polish-Soviet War, militarily speaking, on August 18, 1920, the newspaper ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’ included a radiotelegraphic press note sent from Warsaw titled “There was not a killing of Jews”, which reported the following:

“A Soviet radio telegram from Minsk, dated on August 15, propagates news of alleged killings of Jews in Warsaw. Such news are absolutely false and tendentious.

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<sup>1377</sup> “La persecución de los judíos. Barrios destruidos. Bobas incendiarias. Millares de víctimas”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 2.12.1918, p. 5.

<sup>1378</sup> “La matanza de judíos. Fueron los polacos”, ‘La Acción’, 4.12.1918, p.3. Original quoted text: “La Asociación Obrera-Socialista de los Judíos telegrafió a [...] que los progroms en la Galitzia y la Polonia, así como la bien organizada matanza horrible de Lemberg, fueron llevados a cabo por legionarios, con verdadera crueldad, y con la visible aprobación del mando y satisfacción del vecindario polaco”.

<sup>1379</sup> “La matanza de judíos. Fueron los polacos”. La Acción, 4.12.1918, p.3; “Nuestros ecos. Visto y oído”, ‘La Acción’, 8.12.1918, p. 1.

<sup>1380</sup> “Las matanzas de judíos en Polonia”, ‘España’, 24.07.1919, num. 224-08, p. 8.

<sup>1381</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p. 3.

<sup>1382</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía IX”, ‘ABC’, 22.05.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1383</sup> “Mirando a la paz. Polacos y Judíos”, ‘El Progreso’, 29.12.1918, p. 1.

<sup>1384</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 17.01.1919, p. 1.

The secret union of all the sectors regardless of political opinions and religion, is a fact, and all the Jews as well as all the Polish citizens take an active part in the defence”<sup>1385</sup>.

So, it can be argued that alleged violence against Jews in Poland and alleged propaganda around it, even during the Polish-Soviet War, was a current topic for the press agencies.

If we go into the details of what stand Spanish newspapers had in their reactions to the news of Jews being murdered in Poland, we can start by commenting on the article dedicated to the question of the Lwów pogroms, published on December 29, 1918 on ‘El Progreso’<sup>1386</sup>. First of all, it must be highlighted that the newspaper reported that: “in several Polish cities and above all in Lemberg (Lwów) the capital of Galicia, Jews have been attacked, robbed and murdered. By whom? According to news of German origin by the Poles. According to news of Polish origin by the Ruthenians”<sup>1387</sup>. ‘El Progreso’ also explained that the Synagogue was set on fire, with many people from different ages inside and newspaper’s editors also referred to the telegram sent by a group of Spanish intellectuals to the Paris-based Polish National Committee, in which they “protested against such crimes” [more on this below]. ‘El Progreso’ also referred to the fact the British government issued a statement threatening to withdraw their support to independent Poland if it “does not respect the right of peoples”. Next, the Spanish newspaper’s editors also claimed that “the Poles have tried to apologize and the National Council (representation in Paris) [they meant the Polish National Committee] has published the following statements”: [on the footnote]<sup>1388</sup>.

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<sup>1385</sup> “Últimas noticias de Polonia, No hubo matanza de judíos”, ‘El Heraldo de Madrid’, 18.08.1920, p.4. Original quoted text: “Un radio soviético de Minsk, con fecha 15, propaga noticias sobre las supuestas matanzas de judíos en Varsovia. Tales noticias son absolutamente falsas y tendenciosas. La unión sagrada de todos los sectores sin diferencias de opiniones políticas y de religión, es un hecho, y los judíos como todos los ciudadanos polacos toman parte activa en la defensa”.

<sup>1386</sup> “Mirando a la paz. Polacos y Judíos”, ‘El Progreso’, 29.12.1918, p. 1.

<sup>1387</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “En diversas ciudades polacas y sobre todo en Lemberg (Lwów) la capital de Galitzia, los judíos han sido atacados, robados y asesinados. ¿Por quién? Según noticias de origen alemán por los polacos. Según noticias de origen polaco por los ruthenos”.

<sup>1388</sup> *Ibidem*. The text of the statement of the Polish National Committee quoted by the Spanish newspaper was the following: “Massacres of Jews supposedly organized by the Poles have been discussed in the press for some time. The Polish National Committee in its political action has always defended citizens belonging to the Jewish religion granting them the same rights as to all the others, as in the western states of Europe, and condemning any act of violence against a defenceless part of the population, as a savage brutality worthy of the most severe punishment. An enquire has been immediately opened to verify such rumours.

Pogroms have not taken place in Poland and it is inadmissible that the Poles have been able to lose, in four years of war, the humanitarian sentiments that they have always shown. The national committee has to state first of all that all these alarming news comes either from the German press or from a Jewish source. On the contrary, the Times and the Daily Mail publish a correspondence from JM Jeffries according to which the incidents that occurred

Below the quoted text, the Spanish newspaper stated that a lot of what this note issued by the Polish National Committee contained had to be true because on December 11, 1918 Vienna-based newspaper 'Nien Fre Presse', "organ of the rich Jews in Vienna" included a report from their correspondent in the Galician capital, "Leonard Adelt, who was a presential witness of the events", in which the journalist's version of the events matched the version given by the Polish Committee. They added that in the text written by Adelt it was explained that:

"[...]the pogroms were not caused by regular Polish troops and the legionists, but by the prisoners freed by the Ruthenians and dressed as Polish legionaries. Adelt brings attention to the fact that both the High Command, the generals Rozwadowski, [Bolesław] Roya and [Czesław] Miaczynski [Mączyński] and all the Polish officers, with numerous patrols, opposed energetically to the operations of the suspicious individuals, managing to keep order during the first two days of the re-occupation. The situation changed when the army abandoned the city further east due to the military operations and in the city only the garrison troops were left. Then the deserters along with the worst individuals among the Russian prisoners of war, took advantage of the occasion, under the pretext that the Jewish quarter, recently reconquered, had to be cleaned of Ruthenians. Mr. Adelt highlights that the mobs started to plunder the cafes and to get drunk, unleashing then the worst instincts. The mobs shot against the regular troops that tried to control the situation. General Rozcadowski [Rozwadowski] immediately came back to Lwów and relieved numerous troops from the front, despite danger for the military operations, with the goal of preventing the city from the shame

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appear in a different light, exempting the Polish nation from all responsibility. The Polish committee, based on official reports, can ensure that none of the incidents that have taken place in Poland, as a result of which Jews have been victims, can be considered as a "pogrom" organized by the Polish population against the Jewish population. In some cities of western Galicia the hungry population raided the warehouses belonging to greedy hoarders. These hoarders were mostly Jews, but religion was not the cause of the riots. In Kielce a group of 300 young Jews walked the streets cheering Lenin and Trotsky and shouting "down with Poland". The angry people threw themselves against them, starting a bloody struggle in which about 40 demonstrators perished, not for being Jews but for being Bolsheviks and for having offended the national sentiments of the Poles, sowing anarchy in the country. As the Polish troops crossed Usciluk [Ustyluh], a detachment of 500 Jews, armed with rifles of German origin, fired on the Poles. These responded by dispersing the attackers, resulting in 14 deaths and 47 wounded. Here is another case: Commander Belina sent a Polish detachment one night to the town of Wodawa [Włodawa], which was also attacked by the Jews, with several deaths. These incidents cannot be classified as pogroms against the "defenseless Jewish" population. In numerous locations in Poland, Hungary and Bohemia, bands of soldiers from the disorganized Austro-Hungarian army have committed acts of violence, causing victims, including some belonging to the Jewish population. Poles cannot be held guilty of these acts. During the short time that the city of Lwów was in the hands of the so-called "Ukrainian" army, made up mostly of German and Austrian soldiers, the prisons were opened, releasing common detainees. When the Poles recovered the city, these convicts looted the Jewish quarter without respecting the Christians either. Later, when the Polish commander took Lwów, the perpetrators of these acts were court-martialled, 60 being shot and some 1,500 imprisoned. [...] this can't be regarded as a pogrom against the Jewish population either[...]".



of such excesses. He proclaimed the martial law and made everything possible to establish order. Mr Adelt reports that 12 pseudo-officers and 1240 men, all of them civilians or dressed as legionists, have been immediately imprisoned. The houses were searched to recover the robbed objects and the sale of alcoholic drinks was forbidden”<sup>1389</sup>.

The Spanish newspaper concluded that what mattered, was that: “[...]The Jews are suffering the consequences of the political and social perturbances that Central Europe is suffering. Some [Jews] because of being very rich and others because of being very poor, because of being revolutionaries or reactionaries others, they count with plunder and slaughter every week”<sup>1390</sup>.

So, the newspaper did not comment on the behaviour of Polish *legionists* and their officers and, instead, focused on what happened to the Jewish victims of the violence instigated by mobs and criminals.

The exact same hypothesis about the mobs as the main authors of the Jewish massacre in Lwów appeared, although not exposed directly by the newspaper’s editors, on January 2, 1919 on ‘La Correspondencia de España’, when the influential newspaper included a note claiming that “Polish envoy Stanislas Hempte [they meant Stanislaw Hempel, one of the Polish

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<sup>1389</sup> “Mirando a la paz. Polacos y Judíos”, ‘El progreso’, 29.12.1918, p.1. Original quoted text: “[...] que los pogroms fueron causados no por las tropas regulares polacas y los legionarios, sino por los presidiarios puestos en libertad por los rutenos disfrazados de legionarios polacos. M. Adelt llama la atención sobre el hecho de que tanto el Alto Mando, los generales Rozwadowski, Roya y Miaczynski, como todos los oficiales polacos, con numerosas patrullas, se opusieron enérgicamente a los manejos de los elementos sospechosos, logrando mantener el orden durante los dos primeros días de la reocupación. La situación cambió cuando el ejército abandonó la ciudad llamado más al Este por las operaciones militares y en la ciudad no quedaron más que tan solo las tropas de guarnición. Entonces los desertores, en unión con los peores elementos entre los prisioneros de guerra rusos, aprovecharon la ocasión, bajo pretexto de que era preciso limpiar de rutenos el barrio judío reconquistado últimamente. Mr. Adelt hace resaltar el hecho de que las turbas empezaron por saquear los cafés y por emborracharse, desencadenándose entonces los peores instintos. Las turbas tiraban contra las tropas regulares que intentaban hacerse dueños de la situación. El general Rozcadowski volvió inmediatamente a Lwów y relevó del frente a numerosas tropas, aún con peligro para las operaciones militares, a fin de evitar a la ciudad la vergüenza de semejantes excesos. Proclamó la ley marcial e hizo todo lo posible para restablecer el orden. Mr. Adeit comunica que 12 pseudo-oficiales y 1240 hombres, todos ellos paisanos o vestidos de legionarios, han sido encarcelados inmediatamente. Se registraron las casas para recuperar los objetos robados y fue prohibida terminantemente la venta de todas las bebidas alcohólicas”.

<sup>1390</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “[...] los judíos están sufriendo las consecuencias de las perturbaciones políticas y sociales que padece la Europa central”.

delegates in the Paris Peace Conference<sup>1391]</sup> has arrived in Paris and has made very interesting statements”<sup>1392</sup>. In Hempel’s note, published by the Spanish newspaper, we read:

“I just have to say a word about what is called riots in Poland, anti-Semitic persecutions, riots, etc. A band of deserters of all nationalities from the former Austria have attacked and looted towns and villages where Jews are found in a proportion of 49 out of 50 inhabitants. How could we be responsible for these disorders?”<sup>1393</sup>.

In an article published on May 22, 1919, Sofía Casanova explained that when many news about the massacre of Jews in Lemberg appeared, she questioned their veracity and did her own research to know the truth<sup>1394</sup>. And the truth was, in her view, the following: “Jews and Christians killed each other mutually. They set houses and quarters in fire. The popular wrath, exasperated by alleged betrayals of the Hebrews, took revenge on their neighbourhoods”<sup>1395</sup>. Casanova also reported that Warsaw’s great rabbi, Avraham Perlmutter, when asked about the truth behind the Lwów tragic events, replied to the Spanish writer that “we will know it later” and also told her that “the intemperance of the Hebrew agitators is the cause of many conflicts”<sup>1396</sup>.

A few months later, on July 24, 1919 the weekly publication ‘España’<sup>1397</sup> criticised the new Polish state, due to the massacres of Jews, and challenged the rather positive view of the new Polish state that was presented in the Spanish press. The publication’s editors argued:

“Among us there is a lot of talk about the generous and suffered Polish nation. There is an intention to present Poland to us as a model of a nation of Catholic virtues, but until now no one among us has thought about the poor Jews murdered and hunted

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<sup>1391</sup><https://senat.edu.pl/historia/senat-rp-w-latach-1922-1939/senatorowie-ii-rp/senator/stanislaw-hempel> [accessed 18.04.2023]

<sup>1392</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 2.01.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1393</sup> *Ibidem*. Originally quoted text: “Sólo tengo que decir una palabra sobre lo que llaman disturbios de Polonia, persecuciones antisemitas, motines, etc. Una banda de desertores de todas las nacionalidades de la antigua Austria ha atacado y saqueado localidades y pueblos donde se hallan los judíos en proporción de 49 sobre 50 habitantes . ¿Cómo podríamos nosotros ser responsables de estos desórdenes?”

<sup>1394</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía IX”, ‘ABC’, 22.05.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1395</sup> *Ibidem*. Originally quoted text: “Judíos y cristianos matáronse mutuamente, incendiaron casas y barrios. La ira popular, exasperada por supuestas traiciones de los hebreos, se vengó en las barriadas de estos”

<sup>1396</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>1397</sup> According to Spain’s national library, ‘España’, founded in 1915, was a publication “in which the liberal-democratic reformist currents and the anti-oligarchic, radical and anti-monarchic currents of socialism converge”. The same source also indicates that España “was in charge of publicizing the propaganda of the Allies during the first great war in exchange for funding” <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/card?sid=a4c42bee-41f5-4195-b04c-e635957fbf7a>.

in the free lands of the Poland that got emancipated by means of the triumph of Law and Freedom”<sup>1398</sup>.

The Spanish weekly added that: “The anti-Semitic movement has taken on very violent characters in Poland. A collection of authentic documents describing these horrors has been published in Stockholm. Liberated Poland oppresses and persecutes the unfortunate Jews”<sup>1399</sup>. Last but not least, ‘España’ also referred to the fact that these events led to “protests all around Europe” and to a voting in the US senate to pressure the US president and the allies to take action<sup>1400</sup>.

The echoes of the news, published around the world, on anti-Jewish violence in Poland soon reached Spain’s State Ministry. On November 28, 1918 Spain’s chargé d’affaires in Vienna sent Spain’s state minister a copy of a letter sent to him on November 23 by the Polish Legation in Vienna regarding the pogroms of Jews in Galicia. In the letter sent to the Spanish embassy in the Austrian capital, it was reported that the news which appeared on German and Austrian newspapers regarding the Jewish pogroms that occurred in “Western Galicia” did not correspond to the truth, and “could damage the reputation of both the country and the civil and military organs of the provisional government”<sup>1401</sup>.

As an attachment, the letter included a note written by Cracow’s Polish Liquidation Commission, “based on thorough investigations, made in each case during the regrettable looting of goods in our towns and villages”. In addition, the letter from the Polish legation in the Austrian capital asked Spanish chargé d’affaires in Austria to forward the note sent by the Liquidation Commission to the Spanish government “in order to insert it in the newspapers of your country”<sup>1402</sup>. This is very telling of how important it was for the Liquidation Commission

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<sup>1398</sup> “Las matanzas de judíos en Polonia”, ‘España’, 24.07.1919, num.224, p. 8. Original quoted text: “Entre nosotros se habla mucho de la generosidad y sufrida nación polaca. Se nos quiere representar a Polonia como modelo de nación de virtudes católicas, pero hasta ahora nadie entre nosotros ha pensado en los pobres judíos asesinados y cazados en las tierras libres de la Polonia emancipada por el triunfo del Derecho y de la Libertad”.

<sup>1399</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “el movimiento antisemita ha revestido caracteres muy violentos en Polonia. En Stockholmo se ha publicado una colección de documentos auténticos que describen estos horrores. La Polonia liberada oprime y persigue a los desgraciados judíos”.

<sup>1400</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1401</sup> AHN, H2605, 28.11.1918. Polish legation in Vienna to Spain’s charge d’affaires in Vienna.

<sup>1402</sup> *Ibidem*. The full content (here translated from French into English) of the attached note by the Polish liquidation Commission was the following:

“According to a note from the Polish [liquidation] commission in Krakow, the case of the so-called pogroms of Jews in West Galicia, recently reported in the newspapers, reads as follows:

to attempt to clean Poland's name in other countries, as a result of the news about anti-Jewish violence in the new state.

It is also worth noting, when it comes to echoes in Spain's diplomacy of the anti-Jewish violence question, that on December 18, 1918, in a report for Minister of State Count of Romanones (Alvaro de Figueroa) about the Ukrainian-Polish conflict over Eastern Galicia, Spain's ambassador in Berlin Luis Polo de Bernabé also referred to the attacks against the Jewish population in Lemberg, but the Spanish diplomat did not give many details and did not refer to who were the perpetrators of the violence against Jews<sup>1403</sup>.

Another important highlight in the echoes of the anti-Jewish violence in Poland in Spain's State Ministry occurred on January 5, 1919: the "Israelite Community of Tetuan", (back then capital of Spain's protectorate in Northern Morocco) along with "the Hispanic-Hebraic Association", Tetuan's Israelite Casino, the newspaper 'Norte de África' and numerous Spaniards", in other words, representatives of the Sephardic Jewish community in Tetuan and Spanish nationals in the city, sent a letter addressed to the president of the Council of Ministers and State Minister Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres, Count of Romanones. In this letter they asked the Spanish leader to: "[...] through diplomatic channels, send everyone's protest about the

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"Immediately after the recent political subversion in Austria, different bands of deserters formed in parts of western Galicia, reinforced by obscure indigenous elements. Finding their most enviable booty and their easiest prey in the shops, these bands set out to devastate them, and as the small commerce of the towns and villages of Galicia is largely in Jewish hands, this movement grew itself an anti-Semitic character. There are also indications that this movement is being encouraged by agents sent from abroad by parties, who have an interest in provoking unrest in Poland and presenting it to the civilized world as a country fallen into anarchy. It goes without saying that the liquidation commission couldn't dominate the situation at the first moment, not disposing of western Galicia at first any armed force, as long as the regiments recruited in Galicia were at the distant fronts. This critical situation was further aggravated, given the disorder produced by the dispersal of soldiers of all nationalities, composing the Austrian military formations.

Nevertheless, the Polish liquidation commission did everything possible to stop these serious and dangerous excesses. A manifesto by the said commission called on citizens to form militias, Jews were allowed to organize their own military formations to safeguard their property, and regular troops were sent to the most threatened places. Thanks to this swift action, the Polish liquidation commission, despite innumerable difficulties, restored order in a way that one can already hope that banditry will soon be stopped. The most serious excesses took place in Crzanow [Chrzanów] and Brzeszko [Brzesko], where 6 Jews and 2 Christians overall were victims. By this time, also thanks to the proclamation of the right of war in the threatened areas, order has been restored in the two cities. The inquiries made in each case by the Polish commission have shown beyond any doubt that all the rumours propagated by the foreign presence of a passive resistance and even of an active participation of the organs of government and the Polish military in these excesses don't have any basis or any bit of truth. The Polish Liquidation Commission will take the necessary measures to safeguard for the future the life and the goods of the inhabitants of the country which it governs, without making any difference between the adherents of the various religions and nationalities".

<sup>1403</sup> AHN, H1338, 18.12.1918, Spain's ambassador in Berlin Polo Bernabé to Spain's State Minister Count of Romanones, Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres.

massacres of Jews perpetrated in Poland, which have shocked the world, to the appropriate place”<sup>1404</sup>. The letter senders added that:

“We trust that the government of the Spanish nation, from which angry protests similar to the one we are formulating have already come out, will heed our plea and make, with its valuable support, that our voices of indignation over the unheard-of crimes committed in Poland against the Israelis are effective”<sup>1405</sup>.

It is extremely important to highlight that the pro-Jewish activists from Tetuan mentioned that the Spanish government had already issued protests about the anti-Jewish violence in Poland, but I have not been able to find a source among archival sources and press sources to confirm the fact that the Spanish government officially or unofficially protested in front of Poland about the crimes committed against Jews in Poland in late 1918.

However, on January 16, 1919 (the letter from Tetuan was received in Spain’s State Ministry on January 15) Juan Perez Caballero y Ferrer, Ministry of State’s subsecretary, sent a response to the Tetuan Jewish representatives, addressed particularly to the president of Tetuan’s Israelite Community, in which he informed him that: “His Majesty’s government shares the natural horror that such events have inspired in you all, about which the government lacks sufficient information to be able to establish their exactitude and amount”<sup>1406</sup>.

So, Perez Caballero stated that the Spanish government was appalled by the news about Polish Jews but at the same time it did not have enough data to be sure about what exactly happened with the Jews in Poland and what was the extent of the tragedy. We can also infer from Perez’s answer, he and Romanones had no intention to use the diplomatic channels to make a complaint against Poland for the massacres of Jews occurred in the country.

Moreover, on July 2, 1919, Spain’s ambassador in Paris Quiñones de León sent Spain’s State Minister the content of the letter Paderewski had sent to Wilson regarding “the anti-Polish

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<sup>1404</sup> AHN, H3024, 5.01.1919 “Protesta vía diplomática ante la matanza de hebreos en Polonia”, Jewish Community of Tetuan to Spain’s State Minister count of Romanones Álvaro de Figueroa y Torres. Original quoted text: “[...]de que por la vía diplomática se sirva hacer llegar donde corresponda la protesta de todos por las matanzas de hebreos perpetradas en Polonia, que han conmovido al mundo”.

<sup>1405</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Confiamos en que el gobierno de la nación española, de donde ya salieron protestas airadas análogas a esta que formulamos, atenderá nuestro ruego y hará eficaces con su valioso apoyo nuestras voces de indignación por los inauditos crímenes cometidos en Polonia con los israelitas”.

<sup>1406</sup> AHN, H3024, 16.01.1919, Spain’s State Ministry Subsecretary Juan Perez Caballero to President of the Israelite Community in Tetuan. Original quoted text: “el gobierno de su majestad comparte el natural horror que les ha inspirado tales hechos, sobre los que carece de información suficiente para poder establecer su exactitud y cuantía”.

campaign organized in the US by Israelite subjects”<sup>1407</sup>. It is indeed very telling that the question was regarded as quite important by Spain’s ambassador in the French capital.

In addition, on July 30 1919 Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in The Hague sent a letter to Spain’s State Minister along with a note sent to him by the so-called Anti-pogrom League, to be forwarded to Spain’s government containing “a protest about the way in which Jews are treated in Poland”. He also attached to his letter an article reacting to the note of the League, written by the Polish diplomats in The Hague<sup>1408</sup>. This is another example showing how big the impacts of this question were all around Europe.

*A posteriori*, when the anti-Jewish violence in Poland was no longer a trending question in the Spanish press, on February 22, 1920 ‘ABC’ published a press note issued by the Polish legation in Madrid. The content of the note was the following:

“The news published in the press about the alleged killings of Jews in Galicia are unfounded. The riots occurred in this province during the war with the Ukrainians at the end of the year 1918 caused victims, both among the Poles and Ukrainians as well as among the Jews. The origin and scope of these events have been explained by the inter-allied missions and lately in the memory by the North American senator Morgenthau in which these pieces of information are refuted. Since the moment when the Polish government has taken charge of this territory’s administration, order and free rights of every citizen have been ensured, regardless of nationality”<sup>1409</sup>.

At this point there is a need to explain that the memory mentioned by the Polish legation in the note was the report signed by Henry Morgenthau, dated on October 3, 1919 (published on ‘the New York Times’ on January 18, 1920<sup>1410</sup> and also published in 1920 by the National Polish Committee of America<sup>1411</sup>) explaining that the mission to Poland of the *American*

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<sup>1407</sup> AHN, H1539, 2.07.1919, Spain’s ambassador in Paris Quiñones de León to Spain’s State Minister Manuel González Hontoria.

<sup>1408</sup> AHN, H2650, 30.07.1919, Spain’s plenipotentiary minister in The Hague to Spain’s State Minister Marquis of Lema.

<sup>1409</sup> “Una nota de la legación de Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 22.02.1920, p.15. Original quoted text: “Son infundadas las informaciones publicadas en la Prensa sobre las supuestas matanzas de judíos en Galitzia. Los disturbios ocasionados en esta provincia durante la guerra con los ucranios al final del año 1918 causaron víctimas, tanto entre los polacos y ucranianos como entre los judíos. El origen y alcance de esos sucesos han sido explicados por las misiones interaliadas, y últimamente, en la Memoria del senador norteamericano Mougetheau, en la que se refutan dichas informaciones. Desde que el Gobierno polaco se ha encargado de la administración de este territorio han quedado asegurados el orden y el libre derecho de cada ciudadano, sin diferencia de nacionalidad”.

<sup>1410</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20121111013746/http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9904E5DF103AE033A2575AC1A9679C946195D6CF> [accessed on 4.04.2023]

<sup>1411</sup> <https://archive.org/details/cu31924028644783/page/n7/mode/2up?view=theater> [accessed on 4.04.2023]

*Commission to Negotiate Peace* made up of Morgenthau, Edgar Jadwin and Homer Johnson, sent “to investigate Jewish matters” upon Polish Prime Minister Paderewski’s request, was in Poland from July 13 to September 13, 1919. The report resulting from the mission, detailed the anti-Jewish violent events, generally defined by the mission as “excesses”, in different locations of the Polish lands and the new Polish state from November 1918 to August 1919. For instance, about the November 11, 1918 events in Kielce, the report explained that:

“[...]the Jews of this city [Kielce] secured permission from the local authorities to hold a meeting in the Polski Theatre. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss Jewish national aspirations. It began shortly before 2 o'clock and filled the theatre to overflowing. During the afternoon a small crowd of Polish civilians, largely composed of students, gathered outside of the theatre. At 6.30 p. m. the meeting began to break up, and when only about 300 people remained in the theatre, some militiamen entered and began to search for arms. A short while thereafter, and while the militiamen were still in the building, a crowd of civilians and some soldiers came into the auditorium and drove the Jews from the stairs. On the stairs there was a double line of men armed with clubs and bayonets, who beat the Jews as they left the building. After the Jews reached the street they were again beaten by a mob outside. As a result of this attack four Jews were killed and a large number wounded. A number of civilians have been indicted for participation in this excess [...]”<sup>1412</sup>.

It is worth checking the description of the events in the report against a relevant account in scientific literature. American historian Joshua Zimmerman explains that on November 11, 1918, in Kielce:

“representatives of Jewish political parties and their supporters gathered in a theatre to discuss their future. At the conclusion of the meeting, with an estimated three hundred people present, a crowd gathered outside. Some militants entered the theatre and drove the Jews out into the street. A mob, armed with clubs and bayonets, attacked the Jews, leading to four dead and many wounded. Jewish socialists could be found among the party leaders present. Accusations of pro-Bolshevik sympathies triggered the violent outbreak”<sup>1413</sup>.

Zimmerman points out that the Kielce violence episode was different than the ones in Lwów because in Kielce this was rooted in anti-Bolshevism ideas, on the fact that these Jews

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<sup>1412</sup> *The Morgenthau report*, p. 5, <https://archive.org/details/cu31924028644783/page/n7/mode/2up?view=theater> [accessed on 4.04.2023].

<sup>1413</sup> J. Zimmerman, *Pilsudski. Founding father of Modern Poland*, Harvard 2022, p. 296.

were seen as Bolsheviks. This author also explains that: “the right-wing Warsaw daily, ‘Kurier Warszawski’, described the Kielce pogrom as an expression of patriotic zeal in the face of “Judeo-Bolsheviks”. Maintaining that “Bolshevik agents and Jews” in Kielce could be heard chanting “Down with the White Eagle. Down with Poland! Long Live Trotsky”, the paper stated that local Poles understandably rose to defend their country’s honour on the very day Poland declared statehood”<sup>1414</sup>.

Regarding the events that occurred in Lwów on November 21-23, 1918, the North American mission’s document reported that at the moment of the Austro-Hungarian collapse, antisemitic attitudes grew among Polish volunteers fighting to take control of the city, due to both the fact that the Jewish quarter was under Ukrainian control, and the “the rumour that some of the Jewish population had fired upon the [Polish] soldiery”. The report added that these attitudes were transferred to the regular Polish troops arriving in the city on November 21. The report explained what happened afterwards in the following way:

“The situation was further complicated by the presence of some 15,000 uniformed deserters and numerous criminals released by the Ukrainians from local jails, who were ready to join in any disorder, particularly if, as in the case of wholesale pillage, they might profit thereby. Upon the final departure of the Ukrainians, these disreputable elements plundered to the extent of many millions of crowns the dwellings and stores in the Jewish quarter, and did not hesitate at murder when they met with resistance. During the ensuing disorders, which prevailed on November 21, 22, and 23, 64 Jews were killed and a large amount of property destroyed. Thirty-eight houses were set on fire, and owing to the paralysis of the fire department, were completely gutted. The Synagogue was also burned, and large numbers of the sacred scrolls of the law were destroyed. The repression of the disorders was rendered more difficult by the prevailing lack of discipline among the newly organized Polish troops, and by a certain hesitation among the junior officers to apply stern punitive measures. When officers’ patrols under experienced leaders were finally organized on November 23, robbery and violence ceased”<sup>1415</sup>.

On the other hand, Zimmerman, when writing on the Lwów pogroms, explains that:

“according to contemporaneous accounts, Lwow’s Jewish community declared neutrality during the conflict. But it was claimed that shots were fired from within the

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<sup>1414</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>1415</sup> *The Morgenthau report*, 3.10.1919, p. 5 [on] <https://archive.org/details/cu31924028644783/page/n7/mode/2up?view=theater>. [accessed on 4.04.2023]



city's Jewish district at Polish soldiers during the siege. So when the Polish army took the Jewish district, rumours that the Jews had sided with the Ukrainians led to the outbreak of a full-scale pogrom on November 22, 1918. Polish troops ransacked the city's Jewish quarter, pillaging shops and stores. Homes and synagogues were set on fire while soldiers attacked Jews. The violence was abruptly halted two days later with the imposition of martial law"<sup>1416</sup>.

Zimmerman also claims that attacks on Jews were not isolated events and happened all around the Polish lands on the onset of Polish independence:

“the pogroms in Kielce and Lwów were not isolated incidents. In the remaining nineteen days between Polish independence on November 11 and the end of November 1918, more than one hundred locations in Polish-held areas recorded outbreaks of anti-Jewish violence, nearly all them in West Galicia. The number of Jews killed in November 1918 in West Galicia-excluding the Lwów and Kielce pogroms -was not less than fifty-nine and likely more”<sup>1417</sup>.

However, It is important to look at the conclusions of Morgenthau's report, in which one can read, regarding the blame attribution for the attacks, that:

“it would be correspondingly unfair to condemn the Polish nation as a whole for the violence committed by uncontrolled troops or local mobs. These excesses were apparently not premeditated, for if they had been part of a preconceived plan, the number of victims would have run into the thousands instead of amounting to about 280. It is believed that these excesses were the result of a widespread anti-Semitic prejudice aggravated by the belief that the Jewish inhabitants were politically hostile to the Polish State. When the boundaries of Poland are once fixed, and the internal organization of the country is perfected, the Polish Government will be increasingly able to protect all classes of Polish citizenry”<sup>1418</sup>.

Therefore, it can be interpreted that the report partially attributed anti-Jewish violence to the fact the new Polish state was not yet consolidated, it was work in progress, there was a high level of instability and the incipient new state could not protect the national minorities living within the Polish lands.

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<sup>1416</sup> J. Zimmerman, *Pilsudski. Founding father of Modern Poland*, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

<sup>1417</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 296.

<sup>1418</sup> *The Morgenthau report*, p. 7.[on]: <https://archive.org/details/cu31924028644783/page/n9/mode/2up?view=theater> [accessed on 4.04.2023]

The Morgenthau report also highlighted that since Poland had signed the small Versailles treaty on minorities it would be in conditions both to protect its minorities and to educate its society against ethnic violence<sup>1419</sup>. However, in the conclusions of the report, we also read, apart from the fact that there was a political character besides the ethnic one in the attacks, due to pro-Bolshevism ideas being advocated by those Jews, that:

”the responsibility for these excesses is borne for the most part by the undisciplined and ill-equipped Polish recruits, who, uncontrolled by their inexperienced and oftentimes timid officers, sought to profit at the expense of that portion of the population which they regarded as alien and hostile to Polish nationality and aspirations. It is recognized that the enforcement of discipline in a new and untrained army is a matter of extreme difficulty. On the other hand, the prompt cessation of disorder in Lemberg after the adoption of appropriate measures of control shows that an unflinching determination to restore order and a firm application of repressive measures can prevent, or at least limit, such excesses. It is, therefore, believed that a more aggressive punitive policy, and a more general publicity for reports of judicial and military prosecutions, would have minimized subsequent excesses by discouraging the belief among the soldiery that robbery and violence could be committed with impunity”<sup>1420</sup>.

Therefore, it can be stated that the report did not regard the anti-Jewish violence in Poland as massive Polish civilian or military attacks on Jews, and highlighted the role played by mobs in the attacks. However, the report still placed blame on Polish soldiers, and into a lesser extent, their officers, for what had happened.

It can be claimed that if the report is regarded as accurate and objective, then the comments in the Spanish press by Sofía Casanova denying the existence of the attacks, regardless of who mostly took part in them, were not representative of the truth. Nevertheless, it also seems clear, based on what Zimmerman explains, that there was a German press campaign to exaggerate the dimensions of the Lwów events and generate a negative impact on Poland’s reputation.

Anti-Jewish violence and particularly the Lwów pogrom question had consequences in Polish diplomacy, and more specifically and relevantly here, in the Polish diplomatic strategy

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<sup>1419</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1420</sup> *The Morgenthau report*, p. 7 <https://archive.org/details/cu31924028644783/page/n9/mode/2up?view=theater> [accessed on 4.04.2023].

in Spain. The question of the allegedly German-originated, anti-Polish propaganda campaign in the Spanish press, particularly regarding the Lwów pogrom in November 1918, and the concern this anti-Polish campaign generated, both among Poles in Madrid and in the Polish National Committee, was crucial for the creation of a branch in Madrid of the Polish Telegraphic Agency (Polska Agencja Telegraficzna). Furthermore, it seems a press agency was not enough to protect Poland's good name in Spain, and on a note sent on March 21, 1919 the Secretary General of the Polish National Committee wrote to Polish foreign minister that one of the reasons that justified the creation in Spain of a "consular representation" of the Polish Committee was the need to "react to the harmful action" for Poland in Spain of the telegraphic and press agencies controlled by Germany<sup>1421</sup>. In addition, on May 26, 1919 the Polish National Committee's representative in Madrid, Dzeduszycki, in a letter sent to the headquarters of the Committee in Paris, assured that: "on the basis of alleged pogroms in Poland, our enemies started a new calumny campaign in Spain. This propaganda comes out from anonymous foreign committees and is done here in Spain by Jews that do not have Spanish origin"<sup>1422</sup>. Moreover, on the same day, the representative in London of the Polish National Committee claimed that "when the Polish question gains significance and in a way that is not favourable for Germany, immediately the Jewish campaign about the pogroms starts"<sup>1423</sup>.

Nevertheless, despite this hard anti-Polish press campaign, the Polish National Committee had a strong ally in the Spanish press defending Poland's good name, and this was, unsurprisingly, Sofía Casanova. On May 18, 1919 she claimed that the pieces of information that appeared "in the world press" about pogroms and raids on Jews by Poles around the new state were "defamatory campaigns" in which nations that saw Poland as an enemy used the Jews as "an instrument" and added that "on the glorious day of her resurrection they want to diminish her [Poland's] humanitarianism, so that Europe be outraged against her"<sup>1424</sup>. Previously, on April 24, 1919 Sofía Casanova had stated that "Poland is accused of crimes against the Hebrew nation. And the only thing Poland does is to defend itself morally and economically from the Israelite invasion and predominance", in relation to the anti-Polish

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<sup>1421</sup> 21 marca. *Pismo Sekretariatu Generalnego KNP do ministra spraw zagranicznych w sprawie przedstawicielstwa dyplomatycznego w Hiszpanii* [in] *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne*, 1919 styczeń-maj, red. S. Dębski, n. 217, Warszawa 2016, p. 512.

<sup>1422</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 844. (footnote 86).

<sup>1423</sup> 26 maja, „pismo przedstawiciela KNP w Londynie do Komitetu w sprawach bieżących”, *Ibidem*, n.217, 402, p. 844.

<sup>1424</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII", 'ABC', 18.05.1919, p. 3.

campaign conducted by USA's Jews to pressure Wilson, to which she referred in her article, even mentioning Wilson's family ties with North American Jews<sup>1425</sup>.

Casanova went even further with her statements on the question of the alleged Polish attacks on Jews and concluded that Jewish "intellectuals and directors" should explain that the news about pogroms in Poland were false and should "calm the tensions", and, by doing so, avoid helping Poland's enemies<sup>1426</sup>. To whom did Sofía Casanova refer by "Jewish intellectuals and directors"? Probably what she had in mind was the Jewish political leaders and Jewish journalists, writers, intellectuals in Poland.

However, Cristina González Caizán and Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski explain that in 1919 Casanova was often critical of Poland, not only regarding Poland's internal politics but also "in the matter of certain aspects of the inter-ethnic relations" and this fact, in March 1919 [a few months before the biggest episodes of Anti-Jewish violence in the new Polish state], led Aleksander Dzierżycki, representative of the Polish national Committee in Madrid "to report to the [Polish National Committee] headquarters in Paris, that Casanova informs about Poland in a "very unfortunate way"<sup>1427</sup>. It must be stated here that in few of numerous Casanova's articles on the Polish-Jewish question in 1919 there were references to Poles as antisemites and to the Poles' bad treatment of Jews, but, generally, in her texts about the Jewish question, Casanova strongly criticised certain Jewish groups, especially the influential and powerful ones, expressed her dislike of certain attitudes, customs, behaviours and beliefs of certain Jews, and in a detailed way described the complex reality of Polish-Jewish relations throughout history, but she did not convey a very negative image of Poland and the Poles. Therefore, Dzierżycki's reaction to Casanova's texts, at least as far as it concerns to those referring to Jews in Poland, seems exaggerated.

Leaving Casanova's reporting behind, in regard to propaganda, false or manipulated information about the pogroms in just reborn Poland, it is extremely important to underline that Zimmerman explains that:

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<sup>1425</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio IV", 'ABC', 24.04.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1426</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio, la cuestión judía XIII", 'ABC', 15.06.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1427</sup> C. González Caizán; J. Stanisław Ciechanowski, *wojna polsko-rosyjska z lat 1919-1920 w korespondencjach Sofii Casanovy dla madryckiego dziennika „ABC”, op. cit., p. 23. Original quoted words: „[...] oraz niektórych aspektów stosunków narodowościowych”, „[...] donosił centrali w Paryżu, że Casanova informuje o Polsce w sposób „bardzo niefortunny”.*

“a German correspondent in Lwów filed a story that got picked up in several American newspapers. Giving figures that later proved to be wildly exaggerated, the Berliner Tageblatt reported that eleven hundred Jews had been killed in Lwów. This figure was repeated in American newspapers from New York to San Francisco. The Berlin dispatch included the following: “immediately upon entering the city, the Poles proceed to sack and burn the Ghetto district. The streets were filled with the charred bodies of murdered Jews, many of whom, in the frenzy of despair, had leaped from the burning buildings, which were surrounded by Polish troops. The Polish authorities were indifferent and declined to take measures to halt the slaughter”<sup>1428</sup>.

This way, Zimmerman, in relation to German propaganda regarding the Lwów pogrom, writes only about exaggeration, and not about false news creation. However, he does not refer to the question of who, in fact, committed the violent actions in the Jewish quarter of the Galician city.

In regard to Polish movements to counterbalance the published news about pogroms in Poland, on December 15, 1918 the leading members of the Polish community in Madrid, Frankowski, Milner, Pankiewicz and Dzieduszycki, sent a letter to the Polish National Committee in Paris informing about the creation of a Polish Press Agency in Spain, located in Dzieduszycki’s flat, and asking for funding. In addition, these Polish expatriates in Spain asked the Committee to send them any current information about Polish affairs. Those signing the letter claimed that their agency could influence in a favourable way the opinion in Spain and Latin America on Polish affairs<sup>1429</sup>. Four days later, on December 19, Frankowski<sup>1430</sup>, Milner<sup>1431</sup> and Pankiewicz<sup>1432</sup> sent a note to the Spanish newspaper directors with the following content:

“we have the honour to announce to you Sir that we have created in Madrid a Polish press Agency. Our goal is, within what circumstances allow, to orientate the Spanish press, about the Polish affairs and also as soon as peace will be a reality, to inform Poland about the affairs of Spain, a country where we enjoy an unforgettable

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<sup>1428</sup> J. Zimmerman, *Pilsudski. Founding father of Modern Poland*, op. cit., p. 296-297.

<sup>1429</sup> Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie (AAN), KNP, „Korespondencja ogólna o charakterze zasadniczym. Hiszpania z Comité Polaco en Espana, rządem francuskim, z delegatem inna”. T.I, 2/39/0/2/61, 42. 15.02.1918.

<sup>1430</sup> Frankowski, Eugeniusz: He signed the letter to Spanish newspapers’ directors as “assistant of the Antropological Institute of the University of Cracow”.

<sup>1431</sup> Milner, Zdzisław: He signed the letter to Spanish newspapers’ directors as “professor of the Fine Arts Academy in Cracow”.

<sup>1432</sup> Pankiewicz, Józef. He signed the letter to Spanish newspapers’ directors as “Professor of the French School in Madrid”. He was also an outstanding painter.

and gentlemanly hospitality. Being our goal merely patriotic our statements will be completely for free. Relying on the friendship that exists since many centuries among both nations, we expect that the reciprocate sympathies will increase even more in the future. At the same time, we allow ourselves to beg you that you host us in the newspaper where you have your honourable position, assuring you our higher and distinguished consideration, we reiterate from you”<sup>1433</sup>.

As a result, a note about both the creation of the Polish Press Agency in Spain and about the previously published in Spain news about pogroms in Poland appeared on the newspaper ‘El Sol’, on December 20, 1918 with the headline “Poles protest” and the sub-headline “Note of the Polish press agency”. This text was different than the one sent by Polish expats in Spain Frankowski, Milner and Pankiewicz to the editors in chief of the Spanish newspapers one day earlier, and referred directly to the news about pogroms in Poland. The text published on ‘El Sol’ on December 20 was the following:

“In Madrid a Polish press agency in charge of providing Spanish newspapers information their country has been created. Yesterday such agency sent us a protest note against the public statements made in defence of persecuted Jews in Poland, because these assume Poles are capable to be in a common cause with some criminals that promote violence: “for us, it says, who better than no one else know the state of the Jewish question in Poland, there is no doubt that the writing of such news is due to the tendentious policy of our enemies. It would be our wish that the facts, according to the project adopted by our government, are verified impartially by an International Commission and submitted to public opinion, in front of whom there is nothing we want to hide. In the current moment we can do less than protesting energetically against all

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<sup>1433</sup> AAN, KNP, „Korespondencja ogólna o charakterze zasadniczym. Hiszpania z Komite Polaco en Espana, rządem francuskim, z delegatem inna”. T.I, 2/39/0/2/61, 56, 19.02.1918. Original quoted text: “Tenemos el honor de anunciarle que hemos constituido en Madrid una Agencia de Prensa Polaca.

Nuestro objeto es, dentro de lo que las circunstancias permitan, orientar a la prensa española, sobre los asuntos polacos y también tan pronto como la paz sea un hecho, informar a Polonia sobre asuntos de España, país donde gozamos de una hospitalidad inolvidable y caballerosa.

Siendo nuestro fin meramente patriótico nuestras afirmaciones serán completamente gratuitas.

Fundándonos en la amistad que existe desde hace siglos entre ambas naciones, esperamos que las simpatías recíprocas aumentarán aún más en lo futuro.

Al mismo tiempo nos permitimos rogarle nos dé acogida en el periódico de su digno cargo, y asegurándole nuestra más alta y distinguida consideración nos reiteramos de Vd. affmos. amigos y s.s.s.”

the arbitrary and ultimate judgements issued about us, on the basis of news, whose accuracy has not been checked”<sup>1434</sup>.

It is also important explaining that on January 17, 1919 ‘La Correspondencia de España’ claimed that “the Varsovian Polish government and the Polish governments of Cracow and Posen keep opening up about the antisemitism accusations launched against them”<sup>1435</sup>. The newspaper included a text sent by the Polish News Agency in Spain with two notes. In the first one, it was reported that Polish Jews residing in France defended Poland’s good name and criticised the Anti-Polish attitudes of some Jews in Poland, in relation to information propagated about attacks on Jewish population in Poland:

“On the 24th, a meeting of Poles of the Israeli confession, residents of Paris, was held at the Café del Globo, in which more than 400 people took part. The following resolution proposed by the lawyer Enrique Koral has been voted on: "Polish citizens of the Israelite confession residing in France strongly protest against the slander propagated by a certain number of their co-religionists, in order to combat Polish national interests. The meeting declares that confessional tolerance and equality before the law existed and will always exist in his beloved homeland. The representatives appeal to all Poles regardless of confession and party, begging them to give up once and for all, all the political struggles and form one big strong family for their union. The meeting absolutely disapproves of the actions of a certain number of Israelis living in Poland who are not worthy of the name of Poles, and expresses to the Allied governments and to the representatives of all political parties the testimony of their fervent love for the fatherland”<sup>1436</sup>.

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<sup>1434</sup> “Los polacos protestan”, ‘El Sol’, 20.12.1918, p. 2. Original quoted text: “Se ha constituido en Madrid una Agencia de prensa polaca encargada de facilitar a los periódicos españoles informaciones sobre su país. Dicha agencia nos remitió ayer un comunicado de protesta contra las públicas manifestaciones hechas en defensa de los judíos perseguidos en Polonia, porque ellas suponen a los polacos capaces de hacer causa común con algunos criminales promovedores de las violencias. “Para nosotros—dicen—que mejor que nadie conocemos el estado de la cuestión judía en Polonia, no hay lugar a duda de que la redacción de tales noticias es debida a la política tendenciosa de nuestros enemigos. Sería nuestro deseo que los hechos, conformes con el proyecto adoptado por nuestro Gobierno, fueran depurados imparcialmente por una Comisión internacional y sometidos a la opinión pública, ante la cual nada queremos ocultar. En el actual momento no podemos menos de protestar enérgicamente contra todos los juicios arbitrarios y definitivos emitidos acerca de nosotros, sobre la base de unas noticias, cuya exactitud no ha sido comprobada”.

<sup>1435</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 17.01.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1436</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “El día 24 del próximo pasado celebróse en el café del Globo una reunión de polacos de confesión israelita, residentes en París, en la que tomaron parte más de 400 personas. Ha sido votada la siguiente resolución propuesta por el Enrique Koral: “Los ciudadanos polacos de confesión israelita residentes en Francia protestan enérgicamente contra las calumnias propagadas por cierto número de sus correligionarios,

The second note sent by the Polish press agency to the Spanish newspaper reported that the Swiss newspaper ‘Tribune de Geneve’ saw an anti-Poland campaign executed by Germany behind the news published about attacks on Jews in Poland<sup>1437</sup>.

In relation to these notes sent to by the Polish Telegraphic Agency, ‘La Correspondencia de España’ concluded: “effectively the hatred is fierce between Germans and Poland. The former do not forgive to the latter the invasion of the Poznań region”<sup>1438</sup>.

From this comment we can interpret that ‘La Correspondencia de España’, at least partially, supported or regarded as true the idea presented by the Swiss newspaper and forwarded by the Polish agency, that the Germans were behind the notes in the press accusing the Poles of anti-Jewish violence<sup>1439</sup>. It could be argued that both the Polish National Committee<sup>1440</sup> and ‘La Correspondencia de España’<sup>1441</sup> placed the blame for the news published about Jewish pogroms in Poland on Germany.

However, taking into account the anti-Germanophile profile of the newspaper, ‘La Correspondencia de España’'s stand must not be seen as a very relevant source, when it comes

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con el fin de combatir los intereses nacionales polacos. La reunión declara que la tolerancia confesional y la igualdad ante la ley existían y existirán siempre en su amada patria. Los representantes hacen un llamamiento a todos los polacos sin distinción de confesión y de partido, suplicándoles desistan una vez para siempre de todas luchas políticas y formen una gran familia fuerte por su unión. La reunión desaprueba en absoluto los manejos de cierto número de israelitas habitantes de Polonia que no son dignos del nombre de polacos, y expresa a los Gobiernos aliados y a los representantes de todos los partidos políticos polacos el testimonio de su fervoroso amor a la patria”.

<sup>1437</sup> *Ibidem*. The content of the note was the following: “The Tribune de Geneve on December published an article about the pogroms titled “the third intrigue”. This third intrigue which the Swiss opinion witnesses are the lies about the “pogroms” in Poland. “The Jewish question exists-Mr Millioud writes in the cited article. A very complicated question, whose solution are decided to find the Allies. However, why suddenly blaming, as if there was a given signal, to the only nation that has never persecuted the Jews, and who received them in the 14th century, when they were expelled and persecuted by all the other European countries? The Germans for the moment give up to Alsace Lorraine and to their annexionism plans in the West, but they do not give up their plans in the European east to subjugate Russia economically through Poland. To execute this plan Poland has to be destroyed, Poland has to be prevented at all price to become a strong and free state. The first step to achieve this goal is to take away from Poland the support of their friends in the West, creating contempt and dissensions between her and the allied governments. In her infamous work they are helped by the Jews with a lot of money and influence, who organize anti-Polish and Bolshevik demonstrations in Poland and seed news about “pogroms” in Poland”

<sup>1438</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1439</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1440</sup> “Un comunicado del Comité Nacional Polaco”, ‘La Época’, 27.12.1918, p. 5.

<sup>1441</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 17.01.1919, p. 1.



to an accurate research on what was behind these news with such a negative impact for the new Polish state's image and reputation abroad, including Spain.

Reactions in Spain, apart from those by newspapers' editors and contributors, to the news published about Jews being killed in Poland were seen in the press and came both from Spain's Jewish community and from Spanish politicians and intellectuals. Firstly, on December 9, 1918 aforementioned Jewish intellectual residing in Madrid Abraham Shalom Yahuda dedicated a text on 'El Liberal' to analyse the controversy about the news on anti-Jewish violence in Poland<sup>1442</sup>.

In summary, Yahuda gave arguments to believe that the published news about killings of Jews in several locations of former Russian Poland and Galicia were true, not the fruit of German propaganda, and counterattacked the Polish argument that many of the Jewish victims were usurers, arguing that these should be brought to justice and not used as a pretext by Polish troops to commit atrocities against the Jewish population. It is also worth mentioning that in his text, Yahuda mentioned towns in which allegedly there were anti-Jewish massacres, but that were not mentioned in the Mortgenhau report. In addition, even though it is less relevant for the Polish-Jewish question, it must be also highlighted that Yahuda compared the communication strategy used by Poles, in his view, to get rid of their responsibility in the attacks to Jews and to blame the Jews for what happened, with the communication strategy used by Germany in the Great War after committing atrocities against Belgians and French from the north in the first stages of the war in the Western Front.

Secondly, when it comes to reactions in Spain to anti-Jewish violence in Poland, it must be explained that in early December 1918 a group of Spanish intellectuals sent a telegram, whose content was published in the Spanish press, to Polish National Committee's Roman Dmowski, complaining about the situation that Jews in Poland were going through. On 'La Correspondencia de España' the content of the telegram appeared on December 8 under the title "the persecution of Jews in Poland" and the subtitle "message of the Spanish intellectuals". The newspaper introduced the message of these intellectuals by stating that: "the bloody events in Poland have moved a group of writers, professors, senators and members of parliament to send the following telegram to Mr. Roman Dmowski, president of the Polish delegation in

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<sup>1442</sup> "Las Matanzas de judíos en Polonia. ¿Qué es lo que ha ocurrido?", 'El Liberal', 9.12.1918, p. 3. Abraham Shalom Yahuda's text, due to its length, has been placed in the annexes section, at the end of this work.

Paris”<sup>1443</sup>. On the same day, on ‘El Liberal’, the headline and introductory text before the telegram content were the same as on ‘La Correspondencia de España’<sup>1444</sup>. The telegram was also published on ‘El Sol’, where the editors placed the following text before presenting the content of the telegram:

“The killing of Jews in Poland, especially in Krakow, Lemberg and Tarnów have moved a group of several professors, writers, academics, senators and members of parliament to address Roman Dmowski, president of the Polish Paris Committee, which is regarded as the provisional government of the Polands, the following appeal in favour of the persecuted ones”<sup>1445</sup>.

Here it is worth commenting ‘El Sol’'s note reference to attacks on Jews in Krakow and Tarnow, cities that were not mentioned in the Morgenthau report. Was ‘El Sol’ referring to anti-Jewish massacres in Cracow and Tarnów due to false information included in foreign radiotelegraphic press notes published on the newspaper? Or, did in fact something occur in Krakow and Tarnów? I have not been able to confirm or discard this, which could be the object of further research.

The content of the telegram sent by a group of Spanish intellectuals to Roman Dmowski, reproduced by the newspapers ‘El Liberal’, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, ‘El Sol’ and ‘La Acción’, was the following:

“To us arrive heart-breaking appeals, in which the killing of Jews, women and children, are reported to us; The continuous plunders and fires that occurred in Russian Poland and in Galicia. The Jewish population there is threatened of total extermination. You, accompanied by the liberals from around the world, and also by ours [Spanish liberals], have asked for freedom and the independence of your nation. Once you have obtained them, your first duty is to demand everywhere to your authorities respect and protection for your Jewish country fellows who have made so many sacrifices as the other Poles for the liberation of the common motherland. We ardently desire the reestablishment and prosperity of Poland as well and we regard as urgent your

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<sup>1443</sup> “Las persecuciones de judíos en Polonia. Mensaje de los intelectuales españoles”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 8.12.1918, p. 5.

<sup>1444</sup> “Las persecuciones de judíos en Polonia. Mensaje de los intelectuales españoles”, ‘El Liberal’, 8.12.1918, p.1.

<sup>1445</sup> “Los sucesos de Polonia, un telegrama de intelectuales españoles”, ‘El Sol’, 11.12.1918, p. 6. Original quoted text: “Las matanzas de judíos en Polonia, especialmente en Cracovia, Leopold y Tarnow han movido a un grupo de varios catedráticos, escritores, académicos, senadores y diputados a dirigir a M. Roman Dmowski, presidente del Comité Polaco de París, que es considerado como el provisional gobierno de las Polonias el siguiente llamamiento en favor de los perseguidos”.

intervention to demand measures that guarantee the life and the honour of your Jewish country fellows, whose persecution could endanger Poland's independence, reducing the liberal sympathies, as has been warned by England, on behalf of the allies, whose victory must bring with it the perfect freedom, justice and reconciliation for all the nations"<sup>1446</sup>.

The list of Spanish intellectuals signing the manifesto mentioned on the text was the following: Luis Simarro<sup>1447</sup>, Melquiades Álvarez<sup>1448</sup>, Angel Pulido, Rafael Altamira<sup>1449</sup>, Américo Castro<sup>1450</sup>, Jacinto Picón<sup>1451</sup>, Pérez Galdós<sup>1452</sup>, Fabián Vidal<sup>1453</sup>, Cansinos Assens<sup>1454</sup>,

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<sup>1446</sup> *Ibidem*; "Mensaje telegráfico de españoles", 'La Acción', 11.12.1918, p. 1; "Las persecuciones de judíos en Polonia. Mensaje de los intelectuales españoles". 'La Correspondencia de España,' 8.12.1918, p. 5.; "Las persecuciones de judíos en Polonia. Mensaje de los intelectuales españoles", 'El Liberal', 8.12.1918, p. 1. Original quoted text: "Llegan a nosotros llamamientos desesperados en los que se nos relatan las matanzas de judíos, mujeres y niños, los saqueos e incendios continuos ocurridos en la Polonia rusa y en Galitzia. La población judía está allí amenazada de exterminación total. Vosotros, acompañados de los liberales de todo el mundo, y también de los nuestros, habéis pedido la independencia y la libertad de vuestro pueblo pueblo. Al obtenerlas, vuestro primer deber es exigir en todas partes a vuestras autoridades respeto y protección para con vuestros compatriotas judíos, que han hecho tantos sacrificios como los demás polacos por la liberación de la patria común. Deseamos ardientemente nosotros también el restablecimiento y la prosperidad de Polonia, y consideramos urgente vuestra intervención para exigir medidas eficaces que garanticen la vida y el honor de vuestros compatriotas judíos, cuya persecución podría poner en peligro la independencia de Polonia, disminuyendo las simpatías liberales, como le ha advertido ya Inglaterra, en nombre de los aliados, cuyo triunfo debe traer consigo la libertad, la justicia y la reconciliación para todos los pueblos.

<sup>1447</sup> Renowned Spanish psychiatrist, masonry leader and political activist who reacted in 1910 against the trial on an anarchist (The Ferrer process) and who supported "the group of socialist deputies condemned on the occasion of the 1917 crisis". Spain's History Academy: <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/42195>

<sup>1448</sup> Spanish politician, congressman, founder in 1912 of the Reformist Party and its leader since 1917 until the beginning of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship in 1923. Spain's History Academy: <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/2133>

<sup>1449</sup> Spanish historian, an advocate of *regenerationist* movement. He was general director of Primary Education in Spain's public education ministry in 1911. <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/2255>

<sup>1450</sup> Spanish historian and philologist, interested in the significance of Judaism and Islam in Spanish history. He visited Morocco in 1922 "with the goal of analyzing in depth the Jewish quarters there". In 1914 he published the article "Dispute between a Christian and a Jew" and in 1948 the influential book *España en su historia: Cristianos, moros y judíos* in which he claimed Spain was the result of the interaction between the three cultures and religions in the Middle Ages. Spain's History Academy <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/10389>

<sup>1451</sup> Renowned Spanish writer.

<sup>1452</sup> Renowned Spanish writer, famous for his historical novels.

<sup>1453</sup> His real name was Enrique Fajardo Fernández. Spanish journalist. War correspondent in the Western Front of the Great War in France. Chief editor of 'El Sol' in 1919. He published his articles about the war compiled in a book titled *Crónicas de la Gran Guerra*. He was awarded the French National Order of the Legion of Honour. <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/16267>.

<sup>1454</sup> Spanish writer, poet, translator, essayist, Hebraist who translated the Torah. Involved in the Spanish pro-Sephardic campaign. Linked to Pulido and A. Yahuda. After discovering that his family had Jewish origins, he got interested in Judaism. Source: <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/9957>.

Díez Canedo<sup>1455</sup>, Bello, Aznar Navarro<sup>1456</sup>, Menéndez Pidal<sup>1457</sup>, Muro<sup>1458</sup>, Tarrero<sup>1459</sup>, Odón de Buen<sup>1460</sup>, Pittaluga<sup>1461</sup>, the painter López Mezquita<sup>1462</sup>, the members of parliament Pedregal<sup>1463</sup>, Uña<sup>1464</sup>, Pietro<sup>1465</sup>, etc”<sup>1466</sup>.

It must be highlighted that all the signatories of the telegram were men, and among them there were top politicians, historians, scientist, physicians, artists and one of the best writers in the history of Spanish literature, Benito Pérez Galdós.

Furthermore, it must be also underlined that even Germanophile Catholic newspaper ‘La Acción’ published the content of the telegram sent by the Spanish intellectuals to Roman Dmowski, on the first page under the very wide headline: “Telegraphic message of the Spaniards”<sup>1467</sup>. It could be hypothesised that Germanophile newspaper ‘La Acción’ might have been perfectly aware of Dmowski’s unambiguous pro-allied stand during the Great War and might have not seen any reasons to protect the image in Spain of the Polish National Committee presided by Dmowski, and therefore the newspaper decided to publish the note.

The also Catholic-oriented and Germanophile newspaper ‘El Debate’ did not publish the content of the telegram to Dmowski either, but referred to it on December 8, although on the fourth page, without including the names of the signatories. The newspaper reported: “A group of advanced intellectuals and politicians has addressed a telegram to the president of the Polish delegation in Paris, Mr. Roman Dmowski, protesting the damage to their persons and

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<sup>1455</sup> Poet, translator, literary critic, A frequent contributor on ‘El Sol’.

<sup>1456</sup> Spanish writer, journalist, from Aragon region.

<sup>1457</sup> Ramón Menéndez Pidal. Translator, philologist and historian. Being a pro-allied, he visited the Verdun front during the war <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/30226> [accessed 23.04.2023].

<sup>1458</sup> It cannot be determined who this person was.

<sup>1459</sup> It cannot be determined who this person was.

<sup>1460</sup> Odón de Buen y del Cos: Scientist, oceanografist <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/7744>

<sup>1461</sup> Italian doctor and scientist who took Spanish nationality in 1904.

<sup>1462</sup> Internationally renowned painter from Granada, specialized in portraits <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/26379-jose-maria-lopez-mezquita> [accessed 9.06.2023].

<sup>1463</sup> José Manuel Pedregal y Sánchez Calvo. Member of the Reformist party. Treasury Minister in 1922-1923. <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/35748-jose-manuel-pedregal-y-sanchez-calvo>[accessed 11.06.2023].

<sup>1464</sup> It cannot be determined who this person was.

<sup>1465</sup> It cannot be determined who this person was.

<sup>1466</sup> “Los sucesos de Polonia, un telegrama de intelectuales españoles”, ‘El Sol’, 11.12.1918, p. 6.

;Mensaje telegráfico de españoles, ‘La Acción’, 11.12.1918, p. 1; “Las persecuciones de judíos en Polonia. Mensaje de los intelectuales españoles”, ‘El Liberal’, 8.12.1918, p.1 ; “Las persecuciones de judíos en Polonia. Mensaje de los intelectuales españoles”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 8.12.1918, p. 5.

<sup>1467</sup> “Mensaje telegráfico de españoles”, ‘La Acción’, 11.12.1918, p. 1.

property suffered by the Jewish population of Russian Poland”<sup>1468</sup>. In addition, it is worth highlighting that no references to the telegram written by this group of intellectuals complaining about the anti-Jewish violence taking place in Poland have been found on ‘ABC’.

It is worth commenting that ‘El Debate’'s introductory note mentioned “Russian Poland” and not Galicia as the location of attacks on Jews. Moreover, it can also be hypothesized that ‘El Debate’ did not include the name of the signing intellectuals and the content of the telegram, either in order to downplay it and to defend Poland’s good name or, what seems more likely, to avoid giving publicity to Spanish pro-allied liberal intellectuals and politicians.

The next event in the chain of reactions in Spanish press on Anti-Jewish violence episodes in Poland took place on December 27, when ‘La Época’, among other newspapers, published a note sent by the Polish National Committee that was also an energetic reaction to the news published in the Spanish press about the massacres of Jews in Poland. The content of the note, introduced by the newspaper’s editors comment “we have been asked to publish a note about the inaccuracies released in the press about the interior state of Poland”, was the following:

“The Polish National Committee protests against the campaigns ventured in the allied and neutral countries by Germans and Jews, faking the incidents that occurred in Poland between Poles and Jews, in order to present our country, in the eyes of the civilized world, as an uncultivated country, which is unworthy of self-government. These alarming news distort the facts, because even if it is true that Poland cannot guarantee the public security in its territory located between Russia, the Bolsheviks and revolutionary Germany, because it does not possess a big enough army, it is not true that the Polish population has lost the humanitarian feelings about which it has always given proof, by means of making “pogroms”. The killings of which the Jews have been victims were not organized by Poles with a religious fanaticism, but [were] isolated facts and justice actions, imposed by the hungry population against the Jewish hoarders and retaliation actions opposing revolutionary propaganda in which the Jews take a very active part. The Polish National Committee has had a great satisfaction when it has

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<sup>1468</sup> “Los judíos en Polonia”, ‘El Debate’, 8.12.1918, p.4. Original quoted words: “Un grupo de intelectuales y políticos avanzados ha dirigido un telegrama al presidente de la Delegación polaca en París. Mr. Roman Dmowski, protestando de los daños que en sus personas y sus bienes sufre la población judía de la Polonia rusa”.

known that officers of the allied armies have been sent to Poland to report about the propagated news”<sup>1469</sup>.

The note by the Committee can, therefore, be interpreted as Dmowski’s unofficial response, in front of the Spanish public opinion, to the telegram sent to him by the aforementioned Spanish intellectuals.

It is also remarkable when dealing with this question, that on December 8, 1918 conservative and Catholic-oriented newspaper ‘La Acción’ published a joke that referred to alleged Polish persecution of the Jews. The joke used a pun based on the fact that both the Spanish word meaning “female Jews/Jewish women” and the Spanish word meaning “beans” are exactly the same: “judías”. The newspaper editors’ text was the following: “in other latitudes, other customs. In Poland they persecute Jews [judíos]. In Spain [we persecute] beans [judías]”<sup>1470</sup>. This is very telling of the high level of awareness there was in the Spanish press on the tragic crimes committed against Jews in Poland during the first month of the new Polish state’s existence. In connection with this, it is worth mentioning that Zimmerman claims that a Galician Polish Jew once stated that “the birth of Poland was accompanied by rivers of Jewish blood”<sup>1471</sup>.

A different point of view on the attacks suffered by Jews in Poland appeared on ‘ABC’, on August 12, 1919, when Jose Maria Salaverría made an analogy between the racial persecution of African American people in the US with the massacres of Jews in Poland: “[...] that horrible “hunt of the nigger”, more cruel and perfectionated, more frank and legal that the

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<sup>1469</sup> “Un comunicado del Comité Nacional Polaco”, ‘La Época’, 27.12.1918, p. 5. Original quoted text: “El Comité nacional polaco protesta contra las campañas emprendidos en los países aliados y neutrales por alemanes y judíos, falseando los incidentes ocurridos en Polonia entre polacos y judíos, para presentar a nuestro país, a los ojos del mundo civilizado, como un país inculto e indigno de gobernarse a sí mismo. Estas noticias alarmantes tergiversan los hechos, pues aun cuando es cierto que Polonia no puede garantizar la seguridad pública en su territorio, situado entre Rusia, bochevikistas y Alemania, revolucionaria, por no poseer un ejército suficiente, no lo es el que la población polaca haya perdido los sentimientos humanitarios de que siempre ha dado pruebas, empleando los “pogroms”. Las matanzas de que han sido víctimas los judíos no fueron organizadas por los polacos con ningún fanatismo religioso, sino hechos aislados y actos de justicia impuestos por la población hambrienta contra los acaparadores judíos, y represalias oponiéndose a la propaganda revolucionaria, en la que los judíos toman una parte muy activa. El Comité nacional polaco ha tenido una gran satisfacción al saber que oficiales de los Ejércitos aliados han sido mandados a Polonia para informar sobre las noticias propagadas”.

<sup>1470</sup> “Nuestros ecos. Visto y oído”, ‘La Acción’, 8.12.1918, p. 1.

<sup>1471</sup> J. Zimmerman, *Pilsudski. Founding father of Modern Poland*, op. cit., p. 296.

very massacres of Jews in Poland and in Russia”<sup>1472</sup>. It can be argued this columnist saw racism, not ideologies or feelings, as the cause of the anti-Jewish violence in Poland.

### Spanish views on Antisemitism in Poland

An image of Poland as, at least into a certain extent, an antisemitic country, had been created in Spain in the first years of the Polish Second Republic by the news published in the Spanish press on horrible attacks suffered by the local Jewish population in Poland in 1918 and 1919. This made that, since the first news of pogroms in Poland, Spain’s press editors and contributors paid quite a lot of attention to this question, particularly to the news coming from Poland and other countries about attacks on Jews in Poland. Moreover, what is more important here, Spanish press editorial staff made an effort to analyse the Jewish problem in Poland, to look for its causes and to propose solutions to it. A result of the Spanish press particular attention to the Polish-Jewish question in regard to violence episodes is, for instance, the fact that on January 17, 1919 ‘La Correspondencia de España’ claimed that “the Varsovian Polish government and the Polish governments of Cracow and Posen keep opening up about the antisemitism accusations launched against them”<sup>1473</sup>. A completely different approach was used on July 24, 1919 by the weekly publication ‘España’, whose editors also referred to the killing of Jews in Poland. They referred to “the antisemitic movement” and “a fanaticized nation” as the author of those attacks to Jews. ‘España’ mentioned documents published in Sweden as a valid source presenting details on the massacre of Jews in Poland. The publication stated that “liberated Poland oppresses and persecutes the unfortunate Jews”. It must be underlined that ‘España’ added that there were many discussion in Spain about “the suffered and generous Polish nation”, but the press had not paid attention until that moment to “the poor Jews assassinated and hunted in the free lands of Poland”. The weekly’s editors, at the same time, highlighted that Poland’s independence was due to “the victory of law and freedom”, what they saw as contradictory with Polish attitudes towards Jews<sup>1474</sup>.

When looking at the Spanish press analyses on Polish antisemitism, it must be highlighted that the liberal pro-allied newspaper ‘El Sol’ claimed that the attempt to create

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<sup>1472</sup> “El policeman inglés y el linchamiento yanqui”, ‘ABC’, 12.08.1919, p. 4. Original quoted text: “[...] aquella horrorosa “caza del negro”, más cruel y perfeccionada, más franca y legal que las mismas matanzas de judíos en Polonia y en Rusia”.

<sup>1473</sup> “Polonia”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 17.01.1919, p. 1. Original quoted text: “El Gobierno polaco varsoviano y los Gobiernos polacos de Cracovia y Posen siguen sincerándose de las acusaciones de antisemitismo lanzadas contra ellos”.

<sup>1474</sup> “Las matanzas de judíos en Polonia”, ‘España’, 24.07.1919, num 224-08, p. 8.

“Sion in Warsaw”, which it regarded as “absurd”, was precisely one of the main reasons behind “the wave of antisemitism that currently goes through Poland”<sup>1475</sup>. The newspaper added that a Jewish autonomic entity would be seen by non-Jews in Poland as something to be removed<sup>1476</sup>. In other words, the pro-allied liberal Spanish newspaper blamed Polish-Jewish autonomism or isolationism desires for being the root that generated such reactions among several citizens of the new Polish state.

From his side, ‘La Correspondencia de España’'s London correspondent and contributor Ramiro de Maeztu, referring to the Jewish question in general, without focusing on Poland, argued that: “antisemitism is very bad. The special laws for Jews are even worse”. Moreover, the Spanish intellectual also claimed that “the boycott which consists in deleting the social commerce with Jews isn't good either. But in the common dealing of people trade with people who despise us is avoided. And Jews despise us[...]because their own religion makes them despise us”<sup>1477</sup>. So, in other words, Maeztu criticised the possibility of the Jews having a special status—what can be connected to Jewish political autonomy within Poland as well—and criticised anti-Jewish boycotts, but at the same time accused Jews of anti-Christian attitudes, inherent in Judaism, in his view. Furthermore, Maeztu presented a completely different perspective on the particular causes of antisemitism in Poland than other Spanish press editors and contributors. Maeztu explained that Zionist writer Israel Cohen<sup>1478</sup> dedicated a text on the English newspaper ‘The Times’ to the question: “How must Jews defend themselves against the Poles’ antisemitism?”. Maeztu admitted to his readers that he did not understand the whole text, but added that, based on what he understood [and giving it credibility], he explained that Cohen blamed Dmowski for antisemitism in Poland and that Cohen accused Dmowski of “having spread the doctrine of the economic boycott against Jews”<sup>1479</sup>. Maeztu explained that Israel Cohen made such statements after visiting Poland. In relation to Cohen’s accusations, Maeztu bluntly claimed, “Dmowski is a dangerous man”<sup>1480</sup>. Polish historian Kawalec explains that during Dmowski’s time in London during the Great War, the Polish politician was regarded

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<sup>1475</sup> “Oposición al sionismo. La cuestión judía y la conferencia. En favor de las asimilaciones nacionales”, ‘El Sol’, 24.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1476</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1477</sup> “Israel, la insoluble (de nuestro redactor en Londres)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.05.1919, p. 2. Original quoted text: “Tampoco está bien el boycott, que consiste en suprimir el comercio social con los judíos. Pero en el trato común de las gentes se rehúye el comercio con personas que nos desprecian. Y el caso es que los judíos nos desprecian[...] porque su propia religión les hace despreciarnos”.

<sup>1478</sup> 1879-1961. British Zionist writer, journalist and historian. Author of a book about Jews in Vilna.

<sup>1479</sup> “Israel, la insoluble (de nuestro redactor en Londres)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.05.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1480</sup> *Ibidem*.



by some British liberal politicians as an anti-Semite due to events that had occurred in 1912. What did exactly happen in 1912? Kawalec explains that in the context of the elections to the 4th Russian Duma, Dmowski issued a brochure in which he downplayed and criticized Jewish assimilation, which he did not see as a solution for the Jewish question in relation to the Polish national question in Russia, and Dmowski used the example of Jews in other countries to support his argument<sup>1481</sup>. At this point, it must be highlighted that in his 1919 book about the Polish question, Granzów de la Cerda explained that the boycott against Jewish products in Russian Poland started in 1912 after Jews got a representative from Warsaw in the Russian parliament elections<sup>1482</sup>, and it must be added that Casanova mentioned this boycott was started by the national democrats<sup>1483</sup>.

Did the antisemite reputation that Dmowski already had in England influence Israel Cohen's views about the causes of antisemitism in Poland? Did Dmowski's antisemite reputation indirectly also influenced Maeztu's own views on Polish antisemitism? The answer to both questions is that most likely it did.

Still regarding Dmowski's antisemitism, it must also be explained that Polish historian Roman Wapiński claims that the Polish politician "mythologised" the Jewish question and often was not able to restrain himself from antisemitic attitudes, which went against his own activities and Polish political efforts in front of the Western powers, even though Wapiński highlights that Dmowski reached agreements with the Jewish leaders in Polish politics, something the author relates both to Endecja's trend seen "from November 1918 to May 1920", to stop attempting to take the power in the new Polish state, and to the fact, in Wapiński's view, that Dmowski looked for a compromise with Piłsudski<sup>1484</sup>. However, despite all this, it must be explained that Dmowski's image reflected in the examined Spain press sources and diplomatic correspondence, generally speaking, is positive with the exception of his antisemitism.

On to another aspect within the Polish antisemitism question, Spanish newspaper 'El Sol' saw the assimilation of Jews in the societies in which they lived as the solution against antisemitism. On May 24, 1920 the newspaper explained that Jews in Poland [meaning only Russian Poland] and in Romania were "surrounded by an atmosphere of hatred and contempt

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<sup>1481</sup> K. Kawalec, *Roman Dmowski 1864-1939*, Wrocław 2002, p. 134-135.

<sup>1482</sup> Granzów de la Cerda, C., *Polonia. Su gloria en el pasado, su martirio y su resurrección, op. cit.*, p. 183.

<sup>1483</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII", 'ABC', 18.05.1919, p. 3.

<sup>1484</sup> R. Wapiński, *Roman Dmowski, Współczesne Życiorysy Polaków*, Warszawa 1979, p. 65. See also: R. Wapiński, *Roman Dmowski*, Lublin 1988.

over the last twenty years what led, along pogroms in the west strip of the Russian Empire, many Jews to emigrate to US” and the newspaper’s editors also argued that: “when the Jews of Russia, Romania and Poland will prove with facts that they are as Russian, Polish and Romanian as the Christians of such countries, the antisemitism, survival of medieval barbarities will only be a gloomy memory”<sup>1485</sup>.

Precisely in regard to Jewish assimilation in Christian-origin societies, on May 18, 1919 Casanova argued that the Jewish question was not a problem in Western Europe since the Dreyfuss affair, which in her view reduced antisemitism in France. She added that in England there were Jews in Parliament whereas in the United States “they [Jews] are free citizens”. She claimed that the situation was very different “in Russia, Poland and Galicia”, explaining that there:

“[...] the Hebrews agglomerate, the agitation against them is old and it has exacerbated in the last years. In order to realize the reasons that these nations have for their hatred to Jews, it must be known that the commoners of the Hebrew race are the miserable ones, who in Poland crowd together dirty, sordid, merchants of all immoral merchandise and of all punishable contraband”<sup>1486</sup>.

So, in other words, Casanova attributed antisemitism in Poland to the lack of assimilation and the isolationism of Polish Jews living in their quarters and the trade operations performed by those Jews. In addition, the Spanish writer saw the assimilation process that Jews went through in Great Britain and the United States as a model and as a way to end antisemitism.

However, Casanova was aware that the sources of antisemitism in Poland were not as simple as a result of Jewish isolation. The Spanish writer summarised the history of the challenges Jews encountered in Poland and Poles encountered in Poland’s Jews, as well as the causes of present-time Polish antisemitism. Casanova referred to Casimir the Great and explained that this Polish King welcomed Jews when these were expelled from elsewhere in Europe. She highlighted that Casimir gave them “privileges, religious freedom and citizenship”. Then, Casanova explained that some of those Jews tried to settle in Russia but were expelled

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<sup>1485</sup> “Oposición al sionismo. La cuestión judía y la conferencia. En favor de las asimilaciones nacionales”, ‘El Sol’, 24.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1486</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p. 3. Original quoted text: “[...] los judíos se aglomeran ; la agitación contra ellos es antigua, y se ha exacerbado en los últimos años. Para darse cuenta de los motivos que tienen estos pueblos de su odio a los judíos, debe saberse que son los plebeyos de la raza hebrea los miserables, quienes en Polonia se hacían sucios, sórdidos, mercaderes de toda mercadería inmoral y de todo contrabando punible”.

“by the autocratic” rule there, and ended up settling in Poland. She added that “the [Polish] nobility, splendid and bellicose, spent and wasted its fortune, which was sustained by the indispensable Israelite”. This way, the Spanish writer explained, the Polish nobility and peasants started being “dependent on the trade and the honour of the Jews”. She added that in the 19th century many Jews were expelled from Russia but could settle in Russian Poland and this increased the “dependence of Poles on Jews”. She also explained that within Polish society there were attempts to counterbalance the huge Jewish importance, but the nobility’s “pride” did not match the needs of the economy<sup>1487</sup>. Casanova added that:

“unable to get rid of the forced Jewish-economic cooperation, in the last 50 years Poles have succeeded in a relative commonality of their interests as farmers and industrialists and it has been the nationalist party -whose Paris committee is presided by Dmowski- who took over at critical moments the responsibility of the economic struggle against the Jews”<sup>1488</sup>.

In relation to this anti-Jewish economic strategy, Brzoza and Sowa explain that in Poland, Jewish handlers and crafters:

“All over the country they had to wage a fierce competitive struggle with the small bourgeoisie of other nationalities, especially with the most numerous Polish performer generally under the banner of Christian companies and supported by a large number of political parties (mainly National Democracy, Christian Democrats and minority nationalist groups), which gained political capital by showing the Jewish threat and fighting it”<sup>1489</sup>.

Casanova added that many Poles across social classes disliked the Jews that functioned as “social polyps” but needed them, and this need benefited “the [Jewish] usurers, the traffickers and the banker dictators”. She explained that: “the nationalist party started the antisemitic crusade and consolidated the country in a decision that still persists, the boycott of the Jewish

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<sup>1487</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1488</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: „ Sin poder deshacerse de la forzosa cooperación hebreo-económica, los poloneses en los últimos cincuenta años, han llegado al éxito de una relativa mancomunidad de sus intereses, como agricultores o industriales y ha sido el partido nacionalista-cuyo comité de París preside Dmowski-quien asumió en momentos críticos la responsabilidad de la lucha económica contra los hebreos”.

<sup>1489</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p. 134. Original quoted text: „Na całym obszarze państwa musieli oni toczyć zacieklą walkę konkurencyjną z drobnomieszczaństwem innych narodowości, a zwłaszcza z najliczniejszym polskim, występującym na ogół pod szyldem firm chrześcijańskich i wspieranym przez znaczną część partii politycznych (głównie endecję, chadecję i mniejszościowe ugrupowania nacjonalistyczne), które na ukazywaniu zagrożenia żydowskiego i walce z nim usiłowały zbijać kapitał polityczny”.

trade. This action was consolidated in 1912 and the magnificent patriotic movement made that many houses of the Israelite usury bankrupted”<sup>1490</sup>. In her view, this worsened relations between Poles and Jews. She added: “there is no crime or villainy about which Poles do not think that obscurantist Jews are capable of committing, and there is no humiliation or punishment about which the Jews do not take revenge”<sup>1491</sup>.

In relation to Jews’ important role within Polish society at the time, Polish historians Brzoza and Sowa explain that the fact that within Poland’s bourgeoisie there were proportionally many Jews (a 43% of Polish bourgeoisie being Jews is the data given by the authors), even if these bourgeoisie Jews were a very small number of people, became “one of the most often [used] arguments by the antisemitic propaganda”<sup>1492</sup>. It can be interpreted that many of the Jews regarded as social polyps to whom Casanova referred, and who, according to her, benefited from the needs of gentile Poles, would be part of the group of bourgeoisie Jews.

In regard to antisemitism, last but not least, it is also worth mentioning that on June 6, 1919, Sofía Casanova denied the antisemitism she had been accused of in a letter sent to the Spanish press by Jews residing in the Spanish capital (a question that will be developed below in this chapter):

“I end these thoughts on the Jewish question assuring to all the Hebrews that write to me that I am not antisemite, the same as I am not Germanophile or *aliadophile* either. That I am Spanish and I have placed and I will place my heart and my feather to the service of my motherland and of those who suffer from intime pains or social injustices inside it or outside it”<sup>1493</sup>.

## Zionism and the Polish-Jewish Question

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<sup>1490</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p. 4. Original quoted text: “el partido nacionalista empezó la cruzada antisemita y afianzó al país en una decisión que aún persiste: la del boycotage al comercio judío. Se consolidó esa acción en 1912, y el magnífico movimiento patriota hizo quebrar muchas casas de la usura israelita”.

<sup>1491</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: No hay crimen o villanía de que los polacos no crean capaces a los judíos del obscurantismo ni humillación o castigo de los que no se venguen estos”.

<sup>1492</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p. 134. Original quoted words: “stawał się jednym z najczęstszych argumentów propagandy antysemitycznej”.

<sup>1493</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía XIV”, ‘ABC’, 17.06.1919, p. 3. Original quoted text: “Termino estas impresiones sobre la cuestión judía asegurando a cuantos hebreos me escriben que no soy antisemita, como no soy germanófila ni aliadófila tampoco. Que soy española y que he puesto y pondré mi corazón y mi pluma sólo al servicio de mi Patria y de los que sufren en ella o fuera de ella, dolores íntimos o injusticias sociales”.

A few references to Zionism in relation with Polish Jews are found in the examined Spanish newspapers in the researched period of this dissertation. One of these worth commenting on, is from the Great War period. On August 7, 1917 ‘La Correspondencia de España’'s renowned contributor, writer Rafael Cansinos Assens<sup>1494</sup>, a passionate of Jewish matters, first made an analogy between the Polish fratricide in the conflict and the fact that there were also Jews in France and England who fought against German and Austro-Hungarian Jews, although the author did not mention Russian Jews. Secondly, and more relevant here, Cansinos Assens argued that Jews had “the right to have a homeland” to be proclaimed, the same way as Poles and Serbs had. The columnist also concluded that Jews, as well as Poles and Serbs, fought in the war, so they also deserved to have a country of their own<sup>1495</sup>. It is surprising, to a certain extent, to see Cansinos’s sort of analogy between Zionism and the Polish cause and even more surprising to see his association of the Polish and Jewish realities with the Serbian one. Serbia was already an independent state at the beginning of the Great War unlike Poland and the European Jewish communities of the diaspora, both without their own state in 1914.

Leaving the Great War period behind and focusing on Jewish realities in already independent Poland, it is a good idea to start explaining that in spring 1920 ‘El Sol’ claimed that Zionism was not popular among Jews in Poland, and argued that “Poland’s Israelites, for example, do not want to abandon the Vistula’s shores and leave for Jordan’s shores. They have, from Galicia to Danzig their adoptive motherland. They regard themselves as so Polish as Piłsudski’s soldiers”<sup>1496</sup>. In addition, ‘El Sol’ was critical of Zionism and preferred Jews to be only Jews from a religious life perspective, as in Western Europe<sup>1497</sup>. So, ‘El Sol’ was an advocate of Jewish cultural and political assimilation, although not of religious assimilation into Christianity. The fusion ‘El Sol’ advocated, in the case of interwar Poland did not occur, even though on many occasions Poles and Jews were neighbours, as Brzoza and Sowa explain<sup>1498</sup>.

Another reference to Zionism was made on ‘La Correspondencia de España’ by Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda, who claimed that Zionists were in favour of a situation in which

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<sup>1494</sup> Spanish writer, poet, translator, essayist, Hebraist who translated the Torah. Involved in the Spanish pro-Sephardic campaign. Linked to Pulido and A. Yahuda. After discovering that his family had Jewish origins, he got interested in Judaism. Source: <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/9957> [accessed on 6.04.2023]

<sup>1495</sup> “Los judíos en la guerra”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 7.08.1917, p. 1.

<sup>1496</sup> “Oposición al sionismo. La cuestión judía y la conferencia. En favor de las asimilaciones nacionales”, ‘El Sol,’ 24.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1497</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1498</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p. 131.

the Western Allies would intervene in ethnic minorities-related issues directly and protect Polish Jews instead of letting the Polish state do so. In relation to this fact, Granzów also claimed that “the Zionists think about nothing but stimulating the antagonism between Jews and the population amongst which they live”. He added that non-Zionist Polish Jews were in the opposite stand<sup>1499</sup>.

Last but not least, it is worth adding that on May 29, 1919, on ‘ABC’ Sofía Casanova explained that Zionism generally helped Jews around the world but this was not the case with Polish Jews. She explicitly stated: “these solidarity falters in Poland”<sup>1500</sup>. Casanova also wondered: “Why do not the heroes of Zionism undertake a redemptive action against those Talmudic masses who despise the countries they inhabit, being hated in them?”<sup>1501</sup>. So, it can be interpreted that Casanova believed Zionist leaders had to educate Orthodox lower class Jews in Poland to change their mindsets, behaviours and to take them out from a situation in which they were not satisfied within Poland and at the same time generated troubles to the new Polish state.

### Assimilation or Integration of Jews in Polish Society

As it has been mentioned, the newspaper ‘El Sol’ was favourable to cultural and political assimilation of the Polish Jews<sup>1502</sup> whereas Casanova was also clearly in favour of the assimilation of lower-class Jews into Polish society<sup>1503</sup>. In addition, Casanova explained that powerful rich Jews in Poland often mistreated and disregarded the “Talmudics”, and she claimed that the best approach was “to co-live with them to civilize them”<sup>1504</sup>. It can be interpreted that by “Talmudics” she meant lower-class Orthodox Jews. In relation to this, it is worth mentioning that scholars Broza and Sowa claim that 80% of Polish Jews in Interwar Poland were Orthodox, although these could be divided in Hasidic and Misnagdim<sup>1505</sup>.

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<sup>1499</sup> “Polacos, alemanes y judíos II”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 16.07.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1500</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía XI”, ‘ABC’, 29.05.1919, p. 3.

<sup>1501</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio, la cuestión judía XIII”, ‘ABC’, 15.06.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1502</sup> “Oposición al sionismo. La cuestión judía y la conferencia. En favor de las asimilaciones nacionales”, ‘El Sol’, 24.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1503</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía XI”, ‘ABC’, 29.05.1919, p. 3.

<sup>1504</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1505</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p. 160.

From his side, in regard to the debate around assimilation, Granzów de la Cerda argued that in Poland there was never an attempt to convert Polish Jews into Catholicism and he didn't think this would occur in the future either<sup>1506</sup>.

On to another and very important aspect on this question, Casanova also argued that in the West, Jews had assimilated more to the societies where they lived than in eastern Europe, and Western European Jews contributed very positively “with their financial influence” to these societies they were part of”<sup>1507</sup>. It can be argued that in this question Casanova, despite often being ideologically closer to Poland's national democrats, she differed from Endecja's views, and Dmowski's, who did not believe in assimilation<sup>1508</sup>.

It is also worth explaining that on February 15, 1919 on ‘ABC’, Sofía Casanova regarded the possibility to end “the Hebrew race, polyp of Poland” as a utopia<sup>1509</sup>. We must interpret from this comment, despite its negative attribution to the Jews and likely seeing them as a problem, that Casanova believed Jews were an integral part of Polish society that could not be separated from the rest of it. Therefore, it can be interpreted that Casanova believed that completely isolationist policies towards Polish Jews were not realistic.

In connection to this, it must also be underlined that whereas Sofía Casanova saw Polish Jews as a “polyp”, ‘El Sol’ used a similar image and claimed that if Polish Jews obtained their wanted autonomy within Poland, they would become “a political outgrowth destined for violent extirpation”<sup>1510</sup>.

In regard to Jewish integration or assimilation in Poland, it is also worth mentioning that Casanova reported her conversation with the great rabbi of Warsaw, Avraham Perlmutter, and the Spanish correspondent explained the rabbi told her that “his priests [rabbis] work to heal the millenarian fanaticism and mistakes from those sons of Israel” but Casanova did not expect them to succeed<sup>1511</sup>. So, it can be interpreted that, in a way, rabbi Perlmutter wanted to civilise or assimilate the Orthodox Jews to a more progressive or adapted to the times Judaism.

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<sup>1506</sup> “Polacos, alemanes y judíos II”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 16.07.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1507</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p. 3.

<sup>1508</sup> K. Kawalec, *Roman Dmowski 1864-1939, op. cit.*, p. 134-135.

<sup>1509</sup> “ABC en Polonia”, ‘ABC’, 15.02.1919, p. 5.

<sup>1510</sup> “Oposición al sionismo. La cuestión judía y la conferencia. En favor de las asimilaciones nacionales”, ‘El Sol’, 24.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1511</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía XIII”, ‘ABC’, 15.06.1919, p. 6.

Last but not least, regarding Jewish assimilation, it is also worth adding that Ramiro de Maeztu highlighted that a good Jew, according to Jewish religious beliefs, should not go through assimilation<sup>1512</sup>. Therefore, it can be argued that Maeztu believed in the natural state of things and therefore believed that Jews following the dictate of their religion would never dare to assimilate into the prevailing culture, language, customs of the state in which they lived.

### The Little Treaty of Versailles on the Protection of National Minorities

No direct references are seen in the examined Spanish sources to the so-called “Little Treaty of Versailles”<sup>1513</sup> and its implications in Poland’s reality, and specifically, in the Polish-Jewish question. However, on ‘La Correspondencia de España’ on July 15, 1919, Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda referred to article 93 of the main Treaty of Versailles by quoting its main fragment the following way: “Poland allows the allied and associated powers to take the measures that they regard as needed to protect in Poland the interests of the inhabitants that differ from the majority of the population in race, language or religion”<sup>1514</sup>.

In fact, the actual text of the treaty was almost exactly the same that Granzów had quoted on the Spanish newspaper:

“Poland accepts and agrees to embody in a Treaty with the Principal Allied and Associated Powers such provisions as may be deemed necessary by the said Powers to protect the interests of inhabitants of Poland who differ from the majority of the population in race, language or religion”<sup>1515</sup>.

Granzow interpreted this point as a reference to both the German and Jewish minorities in Poland<sup>1516</sup>. The Spanish-Polish press contributor, businessman and diplomat did not mention other minorities in the country.

It must be highlighted, as already briefly mentioned, that no own comments, reports or analysis, and only press notes with foreign origin referring to the Little Versailles Treaty are

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<sup>1512</sup> “Israel, la insoluble (de nuestro redactor en Londres)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.05.1919, p. 1-2.

<sup>1513</sup> Officially: *Minorities treaty between the principal allied and associated powers (The British Empire, France, Italy, Japan and the United States) and Poland*.

<sup>1514</sup> “Polacos, alemanes y judíos I”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 15.07.1919, p. 1. Original quoted text: “Polonia permite a las naciones aliadas y asociadas tomar las medidas que juzguen necesarias para proteger en Polonia los intereses de los habitantes que difieren de la mayoría de la población, por la raza, el idioma o la religión”.

<sup>1515</sup> <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1919Parisv13/ch12subch8#:~:text=Article%2093,.in%20race%20language%20or%20religion>. [accessed on 14.04.2023].

<sup>1516</sup> “Polacos, alemanes y judíos I”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 15.07.1919, p. 1



observed in the examined Spanish press sources. For instance, on July 2, 1919, 'El Imparcial' used the headline "The Polish treaty" for a telegraphic press note from Paris reporting among other things that: "All of Poland's inhabitants will have the right to the free exercise of any faith, religion, or belief whose practice won't be incompatible with the public order and the good customs. [...] The religious rights of the Jews remain preserved"<sup>1517</sup>. The same press note was published by 'La Acción' on the same day under the headline "New Poland. Summary of the Treaty"<sup>1518</sup>.

Marcin Łysko, (in the English-language abstract of his paper)<sup>1519</sup> states that; "the so-called 'small treaty of Versailles' obliged the Polish state to introduce the principle of equality before the law of all citizens regardless of nationality, to ensure freedom of religious practice, and to grant minorities specific language rights in education and the judiciary"<sup>1520</sup>. Precisely, in July 1919 Granzów de la Cerda claimed that "the Israelite religion will respected by all Poles" and also that "the religious ceremonies of the Israelites are respected [in Poland]"<sup>1521</sup>.

Łysko explains that article 7 of the Treaty granted the same "political and civic rights" to all the citizens of the state signing the treaty, in this case Poland, "regardless of race, language and religion" but the author adds that in the Polish case the minorities were recognised based on language and faith and not based on race differences<sup>1522</sup>. The author also argues that: "a priority treatment of the Jewish minority by the creators of the Little Versailles Treaty was underlined by the rule that imposed on the Polish state the obligation to ensure every Jew residing in Poland's territory the unfettered opportunity to celebrate the Sabbath"<sup>1523</sup>. Łysko also explains that the Little Versailles Treaty granted the right to any citizen in new Poland to use any language "in private life, in commercial relations, in religious affairs, in the press and in publications of any times, in public meetings and gatherings". Furthermore, additional rights were given by the Treaty, and Łysko explains, to the usage of any language as a teaching

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<sup>1517</sup> "Esperando la ratificación del tratado, El Tratado polaco", 'El Imparcial', 2.07.1919, p. 2.

<sup>1518</sup> "Nueva Polonia. Resumen del tratado", 'La Acción', 2.07.1919, p. 5.

<sup>1519</sup> M. Łysko, *Ochrona praw mniejszości w II Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w świetle postanowień tzw. małego traktatu wersalskiego z 1919 r.*, „Miscellanea Historico-Iuridica”, T. 18, Z. 1, 2019, Białystok 2019, p. 109-132, p. 109.

<sup>1520</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 110.

<sup>1521</sup> "Polacos, alemanes y judíos II", 'La Correspondencia de España', 16.07.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1522</sup> M. Łysko, „Ochrona praw mniejszości w II Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w świetle postanowień tzw. małego traktatu wersalskiego z 1919”, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

<sup>1523</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 120. Original quoted text: „Priorytetowe traktowanie mniejszości żydowskiej przez twórców MTW podkreślał przepis nakładający na państwo polskie obowiązek zapewnienia wszystkim przebywającym na terytorium Polski Żydom niczym nieskrepowanej możliwości świętowania szabasu”.

language or for religious ceremonies, but Łysko clarifies that this applied only to private institutions, although the treaty also granted the right to be taught in public schools in a mother tongue other than Polish to children in regions with “a considerable amount” of speakers of any language “other than Polish as a native language”. In practice, though, Polish was used “compulsorily” as the teaching languages in the public education centres with many non-Polish speaking attendees, the same author explains<sup>1524</sup>. In relation to schooling of Polish Jews, Casimiro Granzów stated that a solution would be sought in Poland, so that Jews could have “confessional Jewish schools”, what, in his view, was wanted by “a part” of Polish Jews. About Yiddish as a schooling language, Granzów argued the following:

“In those [schools] the teaching language should be, not the own language of the Jews, the Hebrew, which is not used whatsoever [by Polish Jews], but that particular dialect, mixed with German, called “yuddisch”, and which is talked by all the Jews in the East. The studies level, if using such dialect, will have to be necessarily very average”<sup>1525</sup>.

Casimiro Granzów also claimed that the new Polish Constitution, which was still a project in progress in the Polish Sejm would guarantee “the free usage of the mother tongue”<sup>1526</sup>. In addition, Granzów claimed that many Poles were in favour of Jews having their own schools and had already “allowed” Polish Jews to have such schools. He concluded, as a result, that schooling of Jews would not be a problem in the new Polish state<sup>1527</sup>.

Broza and Sowa clarify that even if the requirements of the Little Versailles Treaty “such as giving other states the right to interfere in Poland's internal affairs, raised numerous objections” among Polish politicians, the Polish parliament approved the ratification of the Little Treaty on July 31, 1919 simply because this treaty had to be ratified along with the main Treaty of Versailles with defeated Germany<sup>1528</sup>.

## Jewish Autonomy within Poland

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<sup>1524</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 118-119.

<sup>1525</sup> “Polacos, alemanes y judíos II”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 16.07.1919, p. 1. Original quoted text: “En ellas tendría que enseñarse, no ya en el idioma propia de los judíos, el hebreo, que no lo emplean para nada, sino ese dialecto particular, mezclado con alemán, llamado “yuddisch” y que lo hablan todos los judíos del Este. El nivel de estudios, al emplear semejante dialecto, tendrá que ser forzosamente muy mediano”.

<sup>1526</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1527</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1528</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 162. Original quoted words: “Postanowienie te, jako dające innym państwom prawo ingerowania w wewnętrzne sprawy polskie, wywołały liczne zastrzeżenia”.

A few of the examined press sources made references to Jewish demands for autonomy within the new Polish state. Different interpretations of these Jewish demands are seen across the examined Spanish newspapers. Whereas 'El Sol' stated that Jews in Poland asked for their "especial, ethnic" autonomy<sup>1529</sup>, Sofía Casanova highlighted the fact that Polish Jews desired autonomy, but at the same time had all the "privileges" of any Polish citizen<sup>1530</sup>. In addition, whereas in May 1920 'El Sol's editors believed that Polish Jews wanted to have their "Sion in Warsaw"<sup>1531</sup>, the same view had been earlier expressed by Sofía Casanova, when in April 1919 she had claimed that Jews wanted "to create a state inside another state"<sup>1532</sup>.

Brzoza and Sowa state that "Jews lived in the territories of the whole state, although nowhere they were a majority"<sup>1533</sup>. In addition to that, the authors explain that: "[...]Due to this territorial dispersion, some Zionist politicians even believed that Jews were in fact the only minority in Poland, because other national groups, especially Ukrainians and Belarusians, were in fact majority in their permanent residence place"<sup>1534</sup>. In connection with this, it can be argued that due to the lack of a clear Jewish population majority in particular regions or cities of Poland, it would have been extremely difficult and chaotic to set up the boundaries at a territorial level within regions, cities or quarters for the autonomously governed Jewish nation, communities or societies Polish Jews desired. In other words, Jewish dispersion and cohabitation with Poles made the Jewish autonomy idea very difficult to apply in reality.

Anyways, Casanova stated that despite these Jewish political wishes of autonomy, Poland was against conceding Jews what they wanted<sup>1535</sup>, and 'El Sol' regarded that what the

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<sup>1529</sup> "Oposición al sionismo. La cuestión judía y la conferencia. En favor de las asimilaciones nacionales", 'El Sol', 24.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1530</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio IV", 'ABC', 24.04.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1531</sup> "Oposición al sionismo. La cuestión judía y la conferencia. En favor de las asimilaciones nacionales", 'El Sol', 24.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1532</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio IV", 'ABC', 24.04.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1533</sup> C. Brzoza, A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945*, op. cit., p. 131. Original quoted words: "Żydzi mieszkali na obszarze całego państwa, choć nigdzie nie tworzyli większości".

<sup>1534</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 132. Original quoted text: „[...] Ze względu na to terytorialne rozproszenie niektórzy politycy syjonistyczni uważali nawet, że Żydzi byli faktycznie jedyną mniejszością w Polsce, gdyż pozostałe grupy narodowe, zwłaszcza Ukraińcy i Białorusini, były w rzeczywistości większością na terenach swego stałego zamieszkania”.

<sup>1535</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio IV", 'ABC', 24.04.1919, p. 4.

Jews demanded was “absurd”<sup>1536</sup>. The liberal newspaper also interpreted that this autonomy would make Poland’s Jews become “a political outgrowth destined for violent extirpation”<sup>1537</sup>.

Ramiro de Maeztu also referred to the Polish Jewish demands for autonomy. He believed that: “Poland’s Jews want to be recognised as a national minority and to be conceded autonomy for all the issues referring to religion, education, language, culture, charity organizations, public hygiene and economic improvements”<sup>1538</sup>.

Maeztu added that: “Polish Jews wish to organize themselves in a communal council system, under the direction of a central council, that will be represented in Warsaw’s government by a minister, with the right to intervene in the deliberations of the cabinet, in all the questions that affect Jews, which are, naturally, almost all the political questions”<sup>1539</sup>. Specific references to this exact system of political organization within the Polish state in “a communal council system” which Jews wanted are not seen either in Brzoza’s and Sowa’s work or in Rudnicki’s work<sup>1540</sup>. However, Broza and Sowa claim that due to the external pressure from the Entente powers, “[...] even the nationalists in their project of Constitution were in favour of granting autonomous powers to minorities”<sup>1541</sup>.

Moreover, Maeztu explained that the Polish government’s response to these Jewish demands of autonomy was:

“[...] that it will concede to the Jews the national autonomy when the United States will concede it to them, meaning, never. To which Jews reply that if Poland was

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<sup>1536</sup> “Oposición al sionismo. La cuestión judía y la conferencia. En favor de las asimilaciones nacionales”, ‘El Sol’, 24.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1537</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1538</sup> “Israel, la insoluble”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.05.1919, p. 1-2. Original quoted text: “Los judíos de Polonia quieren que se los reconozca como minoría nacional y que se les conceda autonomía para todos los asuntos referentes a religión, educación, lenguaje, cultura, organizaciones de caridad, higiene pública y mejoramiento económico”.

<sup>1539</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Los judíos polacos desean organizarse en un sistema de Consejos Comunales, bajo la dirección de un Consejo Central, que estará representado en el gobierno de Varsovia por un ministro, con derecho a intervenir en las deliberaciones de Gabinete, en todas las cuestiones que afecten a los judíos, que son, naturalmente, casi todas las cuestiones políticas”.

<sup>1540</sup> S. Rudnicki, *Żydzi w parlamencie II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 2015.

<sup>1541</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p. 161. Original quoted words: “[...] nawet narodowcy w swoim projekcie konstytucji opowiadali się za przyznaniem mniejszościom autonomicznych uprawnień”.

like the United States they would have not come up with the idea of asking to be recognized as a nation within the Polish nation”<sup>1542</sup>.

In addition, Maeztu stated that “in a way it is a marvel that they [Jews] have come up with such a petition”<sup>1543</sup>. Meanwhile, Sofía Casanova stated that Poland was against conceding Jews what they wanted, and she clarified that what Polish Jews wanted was to “create a state inside another state”<sup>1544</sup>.

Polish author Rudnicki explains that “[Yitzhak] Grünbaum returned to the question of autonomy during the discussion on the principles of the Polish foreign policy, trying to convince the members of parliament, that Poles should think about their country fellows who remained beyond the countries’ borders. He proposed to correct the government formulations about “national and cultural self-government on the territories of mixed nationalities” and introduce to the constitution a text fragment about the right to appoint such self-government to “all the terrain of the Republic” including this way also the Jews”. Rudnicki highlights that “the citation from Hirszhorn’s speech gives an idea on how its advocates understood autonomy”<sup>1545</sup>, in relation to these words by Hirszhorn also quoted by the author:

“The Constitution should ensure all the national minorities, including Jews, self-government in the areas of culture, education in the national [Jewish] language, social care and charity, meaning a national-personal authority. It is to be a relationship of a public-legal nature, expressing a legal person and having as a local authority a national commune, the boundaries of which correspond to the legal person and having a national commune as a local authority, the borders of which correspond to the borders of a political commune[...] in communes where minorities constitute at least 25% of the total population, they should be guaranteed the right to address themselves in their

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<sup>1542</sup> “Israel, la insoluble (de nuestro redactor en Londres)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.05.1919, p. 2. Original quoted text: “concederá a los judíos la autonomía nacional cuando se la concedan los Estados Unidos; es decir, nunca. A lo cual contestan los judíos que si Polonia fuese como los Estados Unidos, no se les ocurriría pedir que se les reconociese como nación dentro de la nación polaca”.

<sup>1543</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1544</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio IV”, ‘ABC’, 24.04.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1545</sup> S. Rudnicki, *Żydzi w parlamencie II Rzeczypospolitej*, *op. cit.*, p. 92. Original quoted text: „ Do kwestii autonomii wrócił Grünbaum w trakcie dyskusji nad zasadami polskiej polityki zagranicznej, próbując przekonać posłów, że Polacy winni pomyśleć o swych rodakach, którzy pozostaną poza granicami kraju. Proponował poprawić rządowe sformułowanie o „ samorządzie narodowym i kulturalnym na terytoriach o narodowościach mieszanych” i wprowadzić do konstytucji zapis o prawie do powołania takiego samorządu „ na całej przestrzeni Rzeczypospolitej”, obejmując w ten sposób i Żydów”; „ Cytat z przemówienia Hirszhorna daje pojęcie, jak rozumieli autonomię jej zwolennicy”.

national language to all state and municipal offices, because only in this way will they be able to freely and clearly express their needs”<sup>1546</sup>.

On May 24, 1919 ‘El Sol’ explained that Jews in Poland asked for their “especial, ethnic” autonomy, but the newspaper interpreted that this autonomy would make Polish Jews become “a political outgrowth destined for violent extirpation”. The newspaper claimed the attempt to create “Sion in Warsaw”, which it regarded as “absurd”, was precisely one of the main reasons behind “the wave of antisemitism that currently goes through Poland”. ‘El Sol’ was critical of the concept of Jewish autonomy within Poland, and, as it explained in this editorial text, it was in favour of the fusion of the Jews with “the national organism” in the countries where they lived as it happened in England, France and US<sup>1547</sup>.

Brzoza and Sowa claim that a problem which the new Polish state faced, regarding national minorities, is that all these people, “except the Jews” found themselves in the new state “against their will” due to lost wars, Entente’s decisions or diplomatic resolutions<sup>1548</sup>. It can be argued that these authors are right when they claim that the Jews’ will was not against being part of Poland, despite the Jews’ autonomy ambitions. This alleged Jewish acceptance of their belonging to Poland was into a great extent due to the non-existence of a Jewish state or a separate territorial Jewish unity in East Central Europe, neither before or after the Great War.

### Polish Laws and the Jews: Citizenship and Nationality within the New Polish State

References to the conciliation of the Jewish national minority with the new Polish state’s legal system are also found in the examined Spanish sources. However, before exploring this question specifically, in a more general context about Jewish rights, it must be explained that according to Spanish intellectual Ramiro de Maeztu, everywhere there were Jews with rich

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<sup>1546</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: „Konstytucja winna zapewnić wszystkim mniejszościom narodowym, a w ich liczbie i Żydom, samorząd w dziedzinie kultury, szkolnictwa w języku narodowym, opieki społecznej i dobroczynności, czyli autonomii narodowo-personalnej. Ma to być związek o charakterze publiczno-prawnym, wyrażający osobę prawną i mający za organ lokalny gminę narodowościową, której granice odpowiadają granicom gminy politycznej[...] w gminach gdzie mniejszości narodowe stanowią co najmniej 25% ludności ogólniej, winno być im zagwarantowane prawo zwracania się w swoim języku narodowym do wszelkich urzędów państwowych i komunalnych , gdyż tylko w ten sposób będą miały możliwość nieskrępowanego i jasnego wyrażania swych potrzeb”.

<sup>1547</sup> “Oposición al sionismo. La cuestión judía y la conferencia. En favor de las asimilaciones nacionales”. ‘El Sol’, 24.05.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1548</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p. 162.

possessions, and many Jews were rich because the French Revolution granted them equality in front of the law after the derogation of “special jurisdictions and feudal rights”<sup>1549</sup>.

When focusing on Polish Jews in particular, Maeztu explained that a Jewish visitor to Poland, Zionist writer Israel Cohen saw that in Poland laws guaranteed equality between nationalities (although Cohen also observed that “antisemitism regulates the customs”)<sup>1550</sup>. So, we can interpret that at least Israel Cohen did not see a problem of equality across nationalities in the Polish legal system. Sofía Casanova also highlighted the fact Jews had all the same “privileges”, that any Polish citizen had<sup>1551</sup>. What is more, Casanova highlighted that the Polish Constitution gave religious freedom and “citizenship freedom” to Polish Jews<sup>1552</sup>. Casanova also stated that: “[...] [Poland] revives, respects the existence of the Israelites in its territories, guarantees their [existence] with its laws, imposing that her own inhabitants and foreigners must be submitted to her [Poland] for the good of all”<sup>1553</sup>.

One could, at first thought, assume, taking into account that Casanova’s comment was published in June 1919 and the Polish constitution was approved in March 1921, that the Spanish writer referred to the so-called “Small Constitution” (Mała Konstytucja). However, when we look at the text of the Small Constitution, officially titled: *Resolution of the Sejm from February 20 1919 about entrusting Piłsudski the continued exercise of the office of Head of State* ( *Uchwała Sejmu z dnia 20 lutego 1919r. O powierzeniu Józefowi Piłsudskiemu dalszego sprawowania urzędu Naczelnika Państwa*)<sup>1554</sup>, there are no references in there to religious freedoms or citizenship rights. Therefore, Casanova must have referred to the projects of constitution that were debated in the Sejm. It is worth noting that in her text, the Spanish writer wrote: “Poland’s constitution, which today enters the international life with its glorious rank and name”<sup>1555</sup>. She might have written this comment because of believing that the new Polish constitution would be approved very soon.

When looking at scientific literature in order to know about what rights Polish legislation granted to the Jewish minority, we read that the Jewish-related questions of

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<sup>1549</sup> “Israel, la insoluble (de nuestro redactor en Londres)”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 29.05.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1550</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1551</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio IV”, ‘ABC’, 24.04.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1552</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio XIII”, ‘ABC’, 15.06.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1553</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía XIII”, ‘ABC’, 15.06.1919, p. 6. Original quoted text: “la noble nación que, rediviva, respeta la existencia de los israelitas en sus territorios, la garantiza con sus leyes, imponiendo que a ella se sometan propios y extraños para el bien de todos”.

<sup>1554</sup> <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU19190190226> [accessed 28.03.2023].

<sup>1555</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio XIII”, ‘ABC’, 15.06.1919, p. 6.

citizenship and minorities' rights were addressed on the debate over the creation of a new constitution from the very beginning, as Polish historian Szymon Rudnicki explains. This author details that within the constitutional debate that took place in May 1919, honouring the May 3, 1791 Polish constitution:

“Jewish fractions declared in the discussions over these projects in the most important points for them almost identical postulates. Both the Zionist Grumbaum and the folkist Hirszhorn brought attention to the fact that these [constitutional] projects do not take into account the cultural-national rights of national minorities, and demanded the recognition of Jews as a national minority, so that on the basis of the Constitution they could create a self-government, and the commune could have not a religious profile, but a political one”<sup>1556</sup>.

Rudnicki adds, in relation to the parliamentary intervention of these two Jewish leaders, that both Grumbaum and Hirszhorn referred to the Jewish demands for equality of rights such as citizenship and religious freedom<sup>1557</sup>.

While still remaining on the topic of the adequacy of the Polish legal system to the rights and needs of Poland's Jewish national minority, it is worth highlighting that across the examined primary sources there were several references to the concepts of citizenship and nationality in regard to Polish Jews. For instance, Sofía Casanova highlighted the fact that Jews had all the same “privileges” that any Polish citizen had<sup>1558</sup>. What is more, Casanova highlighted that the Polish Constitution gave religious freedom and “citizenship freedom” to Polish Jews<sup>1559</sup>. So, in other words, we can interpret that, according to Casanova, Polish Jews were *de facto* and *de iure* Polish citizens with the same rights as citizens of Polish ethnicity. Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda claimed that “everything useful that has to be done regarding the protection of national minorities can be done and guaranteed by the fundamental laws of the Polish state”<sup>1560</sup>.

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<sup>1556</sup> S. Rudnicki, *Żydzi w parlamencie II Rzeczypospolitej*, *op. cit.*, p. 91. Original quoted text: „Frakcje żydowskie zgłosiły w dyskusji nad tymi projektami w najważniejszych dla nich punktach niemal identyczne postulaty. Zarówno syjonista Grünbaum, jak i folkista Hirszhorn zwracali uwagę, że projekty nie uwzględniają praw kulturalno-narodowych mniejszości narodowych, żądali uznania Żydów za mniejszość narodową, by na podstawie konstytucji mogli oni utworzyć samorząd, a gmina miała charakter nie religijny, lecz polityczny”.

<sup>1557</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1558</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio IV”, ABC, 24.04.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1559</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio XIII”, ABC, 15.06.1919, p. 6.

<sup>1560</sup> “Polacos, alemanes y judíos II”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 16.06.1919, p. 1.



It is important here to understand what Brzoza and Sowa explain regarding external influences or pressures on Polish legislation towards minorities, namely, that in the first years of the reborn Polish state, in Polish politics: “[...]in relation to minorities pragmatic questions had an influence, this means the need to avoid internal conflicts and the desires to obtain support from the big powers in order to take the borders over territories in which Poles were not a majority”<sup>1561</sup>.

When looking in scientific literature for explanations on the citizenship rights established in the Second Polish Republic, one reads author Szymon Rudnicki explaining that: “in the citizenship law project prepared by the government and delivered to the Sejm on September 30, 1919” that was part of the constitutional project, it was determined that “a person registered in the permanent population book of the former Polish Kingdom or having a stable place of residence in the terrain of the other partitions, becomes a citizen”<sup>1562</sup>.

Rudnicki also explains that the question of who had right of citizenship in the new Polish state was very complex and was not initially resolved in the Sejm, remaining not completely solved during the Interwar period<sup>1563</sup>. According to this author, something very important to take into account in this question, is the fact that “many Jews did not take care of regulating their legal status before 1914”<sup>1564</sup>. Rudnicki adds that on February 24, 1919 Jews had the chance to express themselves in the Legislative Sejm “for the first time”, and this author quotes Warsaw rabbi Avraham Perlmutter having said during the parliamentary session: “Orthodox Jews, whom we have the honour to represent, being loyal citizens of the Polish State, they stand on the basis of Jewish nationality, with religious requirements at the forefront”, and also having stated that “Jews wish for themselves a full and actual equality guaranteed in the Constitution by the Legislative Sejm”. As Rudnicki adds, Warsaw rabbi also expressed his expectation that

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<sup>1561</sup> Brzoza, C.; Sowa, A., *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p.161. Original quoted text: „[...] na stosunek do mniejszości wpływały przede wszystkim kwestie pragmatyczne, to znaczy konieczność unikania wewnętrznych konfliktów i dążenie do uzyskania poparcia wielkich mocarstw dla objęcia granicami państwa terenów, na których Polacy większości nie stanowili”.

<sup>1562</sup> S. Rudnicki, *Żydzi w parlamencie II Rzeczypospolitej, op. cit.*, p.86. Original quoted texts: „[...] w projekcie ustawy o obywatelstwie przygotowanym przez rząd i przedłożonym Sejmowi 30 września 1919 r.”: „obywatelem zostaje osoba zapisana do ksiąg stałej ludności byłego Królestwa polskiego lub mająca stałe zamieszkanie na obszarach pozostałych zabiorów”.

<sup>1563</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 84.

<sup>1564</sup> *Ibidem*.

“based on the justice and rightness, the Polish government recognizes the specificity of the needs and demands of the Jewish people”<sup>1565</sup>.

On December 14, 1920, on ‘La Correspondencia de España’ Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda published his conversation with the priest and national democrat politician Kazimierz Lutosławski, which took place at Sofía Casanova’s place (Kazimierz was Sofía’s brother in law). In the interview, Lutosławski explained to Granzów that Endecja wanted the creation of a Senate because in the Sejm the national minorities, supported by the Left, had a strong representation, and in the Senate they would have a much lower representation and, therefore, this chamber would be much more Polish. He stated that “the socialists had solidarity with the semitic parties”<sup>1566</sup>. In addition, in July 1919 Casimiro Granzów claimed that the new Polish Constitution that was being elaborated in the Polish Sejm would guarantee the religious freedom as in “the big democratic states”<sup>1567</sup>.

It is worth adding, in relation to the legal implications for the Jewish national minority in Poland of the new March 1921 Polish constitution, that, as Rudnicki explains, “the question of citizenship, as well after the approval of the Constitution of March 17 [1921] was used both by Jews and by the right wing clubs, which alarmed the government that a mass of immigrants from Russia is arriving in Poland”<sup>1568</sup>. After the approval of the new Polish Constitution, on a text published on ‘ABC’ on April 11 but written in March 1921, Sofía Casanova highlighted that in the new organic set of laws “the Catholic Church is regarded as the faith of the majority of Poles, but with equality of attributions and rights that the other coexisting [religions] in Poland”. The Spanish writer also pointed out that the requirement for the president to be a Catholic was finally removed from the final version of the Constitution. She added that “the absolute religious freedom in the Polish constitution gives hope and cheers the protestants and the Jews that craved it”. In relation to this, she also clarified that a Jew or a Protestant would

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<sup>1565</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 90. Original quoted texts: „Żydzi ortodoksyjni, których mamy zaszczyt reprezentować, będący wiernymi obywatelami Państwa Polskiego, stoją na gruncie narodowości żydowskiej z przodową pozycją wymagań religijnych na czele”: „Żydzi żądają dla siebie pełnego i faktycznego równouprawnienia zagwarantowanego konstytucją przez Sejm Ustawodawczy”; „rząd polski opierając się na sprawiedliwości i słuszności uzna swoistość potrzeb i wymagań narodu żydowskiego”.

<sup>1566</sup> “Desde Polonia. Lo que debe ser la Constitución polaca según un diputado de la Dieta”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 14.12.1920, p. 1.

<sup>1567</sup> “Polacos, alemanes y judíos”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 16.07.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1568</sup> Rudnicki, *Żydzi w parlamencie II Rzeczypospolitej*, *op. cit.*, p.89. Original quoted text: „Sprawa obywatelska także po uchwaleniu Konstytucji 17 marca 1921, podejmowana była zarówno przez Żydów, jak i przez kluby prawnicowe, które alarmowały rząd, że do Polski napływa masa imigrantów z Rosji”.

never be elected to run the country, no matter how much hope these religious minorities had in such a possibility<sup>1569</sup>.

In relation to discrimination of Jews in Poland, it is worth highlighting that the political fight of Endecja (National Democrats) and Chadecja (Christian Democrats), among other political formations, against the Jewish small bourgeoisie's domination in Polish trade and crafting, as Brzoza and Sowa explain, was very visible:

“[...]in the approval in the Parliament of legal decisions clearly discriminatory with Jews, such as, among others, the introduction of a (1919) statutory ban, although impossible to be enforced and often broken, of Sunday work, which had to automatically force Jews, especially the orthodox faction prevailing in Poland, to a limitation of their professional activities to only 5 days a week”<sup>1570</sup>.

The authors add that this legislated ban never achieved its goal in interwar Poland<sup>1571</sup>. It is worth highlighting that neither Sofía Casanova or Granzów de la Cerda did refer to this ban.

In regard to anti-Jewish institutional discrimination in the reborn Polish state, it is also worth mentioning that Brzoza and Sowa also explain that “the vast majority of the Jewish intelligentsia (white-collar workers) were employed as private servants, because they found many difficulties when trying to find a job in state institutions and local governments”<sup>1572</sup>.

### Cultural and social aspects of Polish Jews' reality

On her articles on the Jewish question, Sofía Casanova placed a lot of attention on the social structures, beliefs, lifestyle and customs of Polish Jews, and she based many of her conclusions and statements on her own experiences in direct contact with this ethnic/religious group in Poland and Russia. Other Spanish press contributors or correspondents that addressed the Polish-Jewish question did not deal with these topics in their writings, simply and most

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<sup>1569</sup> “ABC en Polonia. Luz y tinieblas”, ‘ABC’, 11.04.1921, p. 3.

<sup>1570</sup> C. Brzoza, A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945*, op. cit., p.134. Original quoted text: „[...] przeforsowane w parlamencie ewidentnie dyskryminujące Żydów rozstrzygnięcia prawne, m.in. wprowadzenie (1919) ustawowego, co prawda niemożliwego do wyegzekwowania i często łamanego, zakazu pracy w niedzielę, co niejako automatycznie miało zmusić ich, zwłaszcza przeważający w Polsce odłam ortodoksyjny, do ograniczenia działalności zawodowej tylko do pięciu dni w tygodniu”.

<sup>1571</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1572</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: Zdecydowana większość żydowskiej inteligencji (pracowników umysłowych) była zatrudniona jako urzędnicy prywatni, gdyż znalezienie pracy w instytucjach państwowych i samorządowych nastęrczało jej wielu trudności”.

likely, because they did not know much about the Jewish reality in Poland and they did not have the experience of living in Poland and spending time in the Jewish quarters, as Sofía Casanova did.

Nevertheless, it was not easy at the time, as it is not easy yet, nowadays, to understand the reality of Polish Jews in the aftermath of the Great War. Polish historians Brzoza and Sowa explain that “the Jews were a specific national minority”, and were very different than other minorities in Poland<sup>1573</sup>. These authors argue that what made the Jews different was that:

“they were during centuries distinguished [...] by the structure of settlement, socio-professional structure, linguistic and moral distinctiveness, unique religious homogeneity and, unlike other national groups, an understandable lack of irredentist tendencies”<sup>1574</sup>.

Precisely on the topic of Jewish social structure in Poland, it is worth highlighting that on May 18, 1919 Casanova described the local social structure of the Jews in Warsaw. She wrote that around 30 Varsovian Jews were bankers or rich ones and that around 60.000 Jews (around 1/6 of the 400.000 Jews living in Warsaw that she estimated) were part of the so-called ‘intelligentsia’ social class, meaning in this case, according to her, professionals and university-attending youth<sup>1575</sup>. Polish historians Brzoza and Sowa explain that in interwar Poland “the Jewish intelligentsia was numerous, and in the group of free professions took the first place [on top of other nationalities such as ethnic Poles]”, adding that this meant “over the 50% of the total of lawyers and doctors”. According to these authors, “Jews and people of Jewish origin also played an essential role among culture creators [in Poland]”. The scholars add that “the industry workers of this nationality, who could count on being employed above all in private companies and institutions, especially those directed by people of the same faith, were in a worse situation”. In addition, 75 to 80% of *intelligentsia* members in Poland were ethnic Poles, and the second most numerous ethnic group in *intelligentsia* were Jews<sup>1576</sup>. Furthermore, Broza and Sowa explain that the so-called *petite bourgeoisie* (small bourgeoisie) in Poland was made up of over 50% of Jews, and added that in some regions of the Polish state all the members of

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<sup>1573</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 130. Original quoted words: “Specyficzna mniejszością narodowa byli Żydzi”.

<sup>1574</sup> *Ibidem*, p.130-131. Original quoted text: “Wyróżniała ich ukształtowana przez stulecia[...] struktura osiedlenia, struktura społeczno-zawodowa, odrębność językowa, obyczajowa, wyjątkowa jednorodność wyznaniowa i zrozumiały brak, w przeciwieństwie do innych grup narodowych, tendencji irredentystycznych”.

<sup>1575</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio, la cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p. 3.

<sup>1576</sup> C. Brzoza, A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p.115. Original quoted text: „w gorszej sytuacji znajdowali się pracownicy umysłowi tej narodowości, którzy mogli liczyć na zatrudnienie przede wszystkim w przedsiębiorstwach i instytucjach prywatnych, zwłaszcza prowadzonych przez współwyznawców”.

the small bourgeoisie social class were Jews. They also highlight that this Jewish presence in the small bourgeoisie “was most visible in commerce”<sup>1577</sup>. In fact, as Brzoza and Sowa indicate, among the bourgeoisie members in Poland, around 50% were ethnic Poles and a 43-44% were Jewish Poles. They explain that the Jewish bourgeoisie was mainly made up of “big trade businessmen” as well as “rentiers-tenement owners”<sup>1578</sup>.

It must be also explained that, according to a table presented by Brzoza and Sowa, in 1921 Poland the small bourgeoisie overall accounted for 3.000.000 people, what represented a 11% of the total Polish population, and the bourgeoisie accounted for 300.000 people, what represented a 1.1% of the overall population. According to the same data source, the Polish *intelligentsia* accounted for 1.400.000 people, what meant a 5.1% of the total population<sup>1579</sup>. Therefore, if we take the percentage of Jews in small bourgeoisie and proper bourgeoisie mentioned in by these authors as valid in 1921, we can calculate an approximate figure of small bourgeoisie Jews in Poland amounting to 1.5 million and of bourgeoisie Jews being 132 000. Moreover, if we roughly approximate the percentage Jews in intelligentsia to a 20% taking into account that the authors mention there was a 75-80% of ethnic Poles within this social class, then we obtain the approximate figure of 280.000 Jews in intelligentsia overall in Poland. Therefore, the figure given by Casanova of around 60.000 Jews in Warsaw being part of Poland’s *intelligentsia* makes perfect sense.

In relation to Jewish *intelligentsia* in Poland, Sofía Casanova also claimed that “the class called “intelligence” in Russia and Poland, having withdrawn from its religious tradition, does not adhere to another faith”<sup>1580</sup>. Casanova’s statement conveys the idea that even though *intelligentsia* Jews in Poland went through cultural and social assimilation, they did not convert into Christianity.

Additionally, in regard to the professional occupation of Polish Jews in relation to their social class belonging, Brzoza and Sowa explain that:

“Restrictions applied in the past to the Jewish population not only resulted in its concentration in urban centres, but also the formation of a specific socio-professional structure. Its most numerous layer was made up by the small bourgeoisie, in which the

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<sup>1577</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 114.

<sup>1578</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 116.

<sup>1579</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 112.

<sup>1580</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía X”, ‘ABC’, 27.05.1919, p. 3. Original quoted text: “La clase denominada “la inteligencia” en Rusia y Polonia, habiéndose sustraído a su tradición religiosa, no comulga en otra fe”.

activities related to the exchange of goods dominated. From its ranks a 60% of people employed in trade were taken. and in the most widespread retail and door-to-door trade this was an 80%. A bit less represented was the Jewish population in crafts, although here too it was a significant part.[...] the concentration of Jews not only had a territorial character but also an industry-related one. The most Jewish [sectors] (75-100% of employees) included: shaping, cap making, production of brass items, haberdashery and goldsmithing”<sup>1581</sup>.

Furthermore, regarding the overall employment sectors of Jews in reborn Poland, Brzoza and Sowa also account that:

“The Jewish working class was not very numerous and was represented mainly (about 80%) by people employed in crafts and the smallest enterprises. The largest concentration of Jewish workers appeared in small clothing factories, food and textiles, usually being property of co-religionists, because only there respect for religious principles could be counted on, that is, allowing the Sabbath to be kept. However, it should be noted that e.g. orthodox organizations have often drawn attention to the fact that employers Jewish people prefer to hire Christians because that's why their enterprises can work six days in the week”<sup>1582</sup>.

However, as these authors clarify, although the Jewish presence in the Polish bourgeoisie was very high, in reality, not many Jews, in absolute numbers, were part of this social class, as well as not many Polish citizens, overall, were part of this upper part of the Polish social ladder<sup>1583</sup>.

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<sup>1581</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p. 132. Original quoted text: „Ograniczenia stosowane w przeszłości wobec ludności żydowskiej spowodowały nie tylko jej koncentrację w ośrodkach miejskich, ale także ukształtowanie się specyficznej struktury społeczno-zawodowej. Jej najliczniejszą warstwę stanowiło drobnomieszczanstwo, które m.in. opanowało większość zajęć związanych z wymianą towarową. Z jego szeregów rekrutowało się ok. 60% osób zatrudnionych w handlu, a w najbardziej rozpowszechnionym handlu detalicznym i domokrężnym działało ok. 80%. Trochę mniej licznie reprezentowana była ludność żydowska w rzemiośle, choć i tu był znaczący [...]. Koncentracja Żydów miała nie tylko charakter terytorialny, ale i branżowy. Za najbardziej żydowskie (75-100% zatrudnionych) należy uznać m.in. cholewkarstwo, czapnictwo, produkcję przedmiotów z mosiądzu, wyrób pasmanterii i złotnictwo”.

<sup>1582</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 134. Original quoted text: “Niezbyt liczna była żydowska klasa robotnicza, reprezentowana głównie (w ok. 80%) przez osoby zatrudnione w rzemiośle i najmniejszych przedsiębiorstwach. Największa koncentracja robotników żydowskich występowała w drobnych zakładach odzieżowych, spożywczych i włókienniczych, zazwyczaj będących własnością współwyznawców, gdyż tylko tam można było liczyć na respektowanie zasad religijnych, to znaczy umożliwienie świętowania szabatu. Należy jednak zaznaczyć, że np. organizacje ortodoksyjnie niejednokrotnie zwracały uwagę na fakt, iż pracodawcy żydowscy wolą zatrudniać chrześcijan, gdyż dzięki temu ich przedsiębiorstwa mogą pracować sześć dni w tygodniu”.

<sup>1583</sup> *Ibidem*.

Still regarding social structures of Polish Jews, it is also worth underlining that on May 29, 1919 Casanova concluded that there was a “contrast” between two types of Jews, those “with superiority pride” and those who were constantly humiliated in villages and suburbs<sup>1584</sup>. In addition, the Spanish writer believed that rich Zionist Jews did not support poorer Jews in Poland<sup>1585</sup>. Moreover, in relation to cross-social-class intra-Jewish relations in Poland, Casanova explained that powerful rich Jews in Poland often mistreated and disregarded the “Talmudics”. She added that Polish Jews who were members of “intelligentsia” hid their Judaism and denied their own belonging to “the disgusting race” [this does not mean Casanova really believed that the race was disgusting, but only that she claimed those Jews saw the Jewish race as such]<sup>1586</sup>. Casanova highlighted she did not like those powerful Jews’ attitude, and she explained:

“[...] and in the antisemitic environment in which I live I never remained silent with my judgement[opinion], that the disgraceful and persecuted Talmudic, not a renegade, deserves my consideration and sympathy more than the scholar and polished professional [Jew] trying to pass for an old Christian”<sup>1587</sup>.

In relation to Orthodox Jews and their isolationism, Casanova also pointed out that “Poland’s Jewish masses live, as I said, closed in the Jerusalem wall of their Talmud and their history”<sup>1588</sup>. Additionally, regarding the socially lower isolated Jews in Warsaw, she claimed that: “most [Jews] in Nalefka [Nalewki] and other peripheral neighbourhoods of the capital are refractory to Christianity and live in the hermetic fence of its biblical traditions and their businesses”<sup>1589</sup>.

Regarding the isolationism of Polish Jews, Broza and Sowa identify the concept of “hermeticity” as “one of the characteristics of the Jewish ethnic minority” in the new Polish state, and argue that:

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<sup>1584</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía XI”, ‘ABC’, 29.05.1919, p. 3.

<sup>1585</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1586</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1587</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “[...] y en el medio antisemita en el que vivo no callé nunca mi juicio, que merecen más consideración y simpatía el astroso y perseguido talmúdico, no renegado, que el erudito y pulcro profesional, queriendo pasar por cristiano”.

<sup>1588</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII”, 18.05.1919, p.4. Original quoted text: “La masa judía de Polonia vive, según dije, encerrada en el muro jerusalénico de su Talmud y de su historia”.

<sup>1589</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 3. Original quoted text: “La gran muchedumbre habitante en Nalefka y otros barrios extremos de la capital, es refractaria al cristianismo y vive en el hermético cerco de sus tradiciones bíblicas y de sus negocios”.

“Despite the fact that Jews and Poles, similarly as in the case of representatives of other nations, during decades or centuries lived in the same localities, in these same streets and many times even in the same houses, in practice both communities didn’t live together, but next to each other. The mutual knowledge of customs, religion and language was negligible, although probably a little greater on the Jewish side than on the Polish side. Both communities were almost completely alien to each other, which often led to misunderstandings and even conflicts”<sup>1590</sup>.

These authors also claim that Judaism prevented Jews from getting closer to Poles in many senses, and “separated” both nationalities. They explain that in Poland the Jewish faith: “imposed on its followers not only the most visible duty of celebrating religiously another day than their Christian surroundings, but also, at least the Orthodox part, ways of behaving, clothes they had to wear, etc.”<sup>1591</sup>. In addition, the same authors state that “from a religious point of view, Jews were the most cohesive community” in Poland and, as an example of this, they refer to the fact that:

“If even among the followers of Judaism sometimes there were people declaring at the same time as their native language Polish, German or Russian, there is not any known case of a person declaring herself to be a follower of one the Christian denominations, declared as her mother tongue Yiddish or Hebrew”<sup>1592</sup>.

Furthermore, Casanova very clearly illustrated the differences between Orthodox Jews in Poland and Jews in the West, in regard to their beliefs and religious practices, when she claimed that “in the civilized countries, Jews regard the Talmud as a book from a museum or an archive, whereas Poland’s Jews obey it and it [Talmud] is for them like alive letters”<sup>1593</sup>.

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<sup>1590</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p. 131. Original quoted text: “Mimo że Żydzi i Polacy, podobnie jak przedstawiciele innych narodów, przez dziesięciolecia lub stulecia mieszkali w tych samych miejscowościach, przy tych samych ulicach, a niejednokrotnie nawet w tych samych domach, to w praktyce obie społeczności żyły nie razem, ale obok siebie. Wzajemna znajomość obyczajowości, religii i języka była znikoma, choć chyba trochę większa po stronie żydowskiej niż polskiej. Obie społeczności były sobie prawie całkowicie obce, co niejednokrotnie prowadziło do nieporozumień, a nawet konfliktów”.

<sup>1591</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: „[...] narzucająca swym wyznawcom nie tylko najbardziej widoczny obowiązek świętowania innego dnia niż chrześcijańskie otoczenie, ale także, przynajmniej części ortodoksyjnej, sposoby zachowania się, ubierania itd”.

<sup>1592</sup> *Ibidem*. Original quoted text: “Jeżeli nawet wśród wyznawców religii mojżeszowej zdarzały się nieraz osoby deklarujące równocześnie jako swój język ojczysty polski, niemiecki czy rosyjski, to nie jest znany przypadek, by osoba przyznająca się do jednego z wyznań chrześcijańskich deklarowała jako swój język ojczysty jidysz lub hebrajski”.

<sup>1593</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio IX”, ‘ABC’, 22.05.1919 p.3. Original quoted text: “en los países civilizados, los judíos consideran el Talmud cual libro de museo o archivo, mientras que los de Polonia lo obedecen, y es para ellos letra viva”.



Sofía Casanova admitted to her readers that she had always been very interested in these [non-assimilated] Polish Jews. Next, she claimed that “circumstances of life” made them behave in such a “devious” way. She also argued that: “the evil has to be fought by curing the person who sends the evil, but the centuries go by without the therapeutic procedure changing. The body of the culprit is punished, but the germs of impurity that his spirit carries expand and infect other spirits with the age-old moral leprosy”<sup>1594</sup>.

Casanova also described the physical aspect and appearance of those Jews rather negatively<sup>1595</sup> and stated that “the ghetto is a miserable anachronism”<sup>1596</sup>. She added that in their quarters, Polish Jews:

“live tightly in their gloomy little tends, feed themselves on herring and onions, and now that these foodstuffs are utterly lacking, they will starve, for their fanaticism forbids them much food and drink. Their dirt is proverbial and derives from one of their traditions. It should not be washed except with water from the mitkwa with running water taken from the very spring by innocent hands. Innocent hands will not be lacking in those tribes, but finding running water among the ice in capitals and towns is something else. Naturally, the toilet problem solves itself by no one washing in the ghetto”<sup>1597</sup>.

Casanova’s above description of low-class Orthodox Jews’ living conditions helps one understand the perception the Spanish writer had of the Jewish quarters in Poland, which, in her view, seemed to be places set in a distant past.

Brzoza and Sowa explain that in the largest Polish cities containing the biggest amount of Jews, “there entire districts were created, particular cities within the city, dominated by Jews,

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<sup>1594</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p. 5, Original quoted text: “el mal ha de combatirse curando a quien hace el mal, pero pasan y pasan los siglos sin que el procedimiento terapéutico varie. Se castiga al cuerpo del culpable, pero los gérmenes de la impureza que lleva su espíritu expándese y contagian a otros espíritus la lepra moral milenaria”.

<sup>1595</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p. 3.

<sup>1596</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía XI”, ‘ABC’, 29.05.19, p. 3.

<sup>1597</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p.4-5, Original quoted text: “Viven estrechamente en sus tenduchos lóbegros, aliméntanse con arenques y cebolla, y ahora que se carece en absoluto de esos comestibles, pasarán hambre, pues su fanatismo les veda muchos alimentos y bebidas. Su suciedad es proverbial y deriva de una de sus tradiciones. No ha de lavarse sino con agua de la mitkwa con agua corriente cogida en el mismo manantial por manos inocentes. Manos inocentes no faltarán en las tribus estas, pero hallar en capitales y villas agua corriente entre los hielos es otra cosa. Naturalmente el problema del aseo no se resuelve por sí solo, no lavándose nadie en el ghetto”

such as Nalewki in Warsaw and Kazimierz in Cracow”<sup>1598</sup>. The authors also explain that most Jews lived in cities, whereas most Polish citizens, overall, lived in the countryside, but, in fact, more Jews lived in small cities and towns than in big cities, and in these small towns Jews made up a very significant proportion of the total population. The big cities with the largest numbers of Jews listed by the authors are Warsaw, Łódź, Vilna, Cracow, Lwów<sup>1599</sup>. They add that “only 24% of the total [Jewish] population [in Poland] lived in the countryside”<sup>1600</sup>. In relation to this, it is worth mentioning that Sofía Casanova referred to the Jewish ambulant sellers that travelled around “Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine and Galicia”, and to the particular Jewish ambulant sellers that she let enter her Drozdowo manor. She highlighted their poverty and misery, as well as the fact that they did not tell much about themselves and that were not allowed to accept food or drinks from Christians<sup>1601</sup>.

On the topic of social relations between Jews and gentiles, Casanova explained that sometimes Nordic women were seduced by the money that Jews in love with them could offer them, but she also explained that Polish women detested Jewish men:

“[...]particularly in Poland, all the classes, from the nobility to the last female peasant, angrily refuse the mesalliance with the spurious, being rare and badly regarded the unions that the religion, the tradition, that the feeling reprobate. I have often felt hurt by the antipathy, the revulsion that educated Jews, born in their country, inspire in the charming Polish women. They [Jews] are foreigners-the most antipathic I hear saying to girls in age to get married, and to the midwives, their mothers. They are considered as foreigners even when baptised or willing to get baptised have taken part in conspirations and have sacrificed their youth for Poland’s independence. The repulsion of this white Slavic women towards the sons of Israel, with sadly black eyes and sallow features, is something tragic and irreparable, but the secular curse that frightens Catholic virgins weighs on them, the sins of greed and concupiscence of their ancestors, the stigma of obscure crimes and the legend of ritual crime, the murder of

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<sup>1598</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p.132. Original quoted text: „Powstawały tam cały dzielnice, swoiste miasta w mieście, zdominowane przez Żydów, np. Nalewki w Warszawie czy Kazimierz w Krakowie”.

<sup>1599</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1600</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1601</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía XIII”, ‘ABC’, 15.06.1919, p. 6.

Christian children for May his blood fall on the Israelite Passover bread”<sup>1602</sup>.

When it comes to family structures of the Polish Orthodox Jews, Casanova explained that:

“the family retains patriarchal prestige. Men and women marry young, have many children, and adultery is not tolerated between them. Divorce, or rather repudiation, undoes marriages, in case of sterility, for example with the authorization of the rabbi, but adultery is a crime and dishonour”<sup>1603</sup>.

In addition, in relation to family-related behaviours of isolated Polish Jews, Casanova explained the following:

“The uneducated, the Talmudic, the merchants of all low merchandise, as I noted in my previous one—as well as the educated and even the good Christians—will do mischief in the fence of others, but they keep the family, the first, not only cordial attachment, rather, he cares for it and protects it, knowing that the greater the number of Hebrews in the world, the greater their influence. His desire is the perpetuity of a race that still hears the voice of the prophets, promising them the return of his kingdom of Jerusalem”<sup>1604</sup>.

Casanova’s above description reflects very well the isolation in which Orthodox Jews lived at the beginning of reborn Poland’s existence.

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<sup>1602</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía XI”, ‘ABC’, 29.05.1919, p. 3. Original quoted text: “[...] particularmente en Polonia, todas las clases, desde la nobleza a la última campesina, rechazan airadas la *mesialance* con los espurios, siendo raros y malquistos los enlaces que la religión, que la tradición, que el sentimiento reprueban. Me he dolido a menudo de la antipatía, de la repulsión que inspiran a las encantadoras polacas los judíos educados, nacidos en su país.—Son extranjeros; los más antipáticos de los extranjeros—oigo decir a niñas casaderas y a las matronas, sus madres. Se los considera extranjeros hasta cuando bautizados o dispuestos a bautizarse han conspirado y consagrado su juventud a la independencia de Polonia. Es algo trágico e irreparable esta repulsión de las blancas eslavas hacia los hijos de Israel, de ojos tristemente negros y de cetrinas facciones; pero es que sobre ellos pesa la maldición secular que atemoriza a las vírgenes del catolicismo; los pecados de avaricia y concupiscencia de sus antepasados, el estigma de oscuros crímenes y la leyenda del crimen ritual, el asesinato de niños cristianos para que su sangre caiga en el pan de la Pascua israélica”.

<sup>1603</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía VIII”, ‘ABC’, 18.05.1919, p. 5. Original quoted text: “La familia conserva el prestigio patriarcal. Hombres y mujeres se casan jóvenes, tienen muchos hijos, y el adulterio no se tolera entre ellos. El divorcio, más bien el repudio, deshace los matrimonios, en caso de esterilidad; por ejemplo con autorización del Rabino; pero el adulterio es crimen y deshonor”.

<sup>1604</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía X”, ‘ABC’, 27.05.1919, p. 3. Original quoted text: “Los incultos, los talmúdicos, los mercaderes de toda baja mercadería, según anotaba en mi anterior—así como los cultos y hasta los buenos cristianos—harán diabluras en el cercado ajeno, pero conservan a la familia, los primeros, no sólo apego cordial, sino que la cuida y la protege, sabiendo que a mayor número de hebreos en el mundo, mayor es el influjo de ellos. Su anhelo es la perpetuidad de una raza que oye aún la voz de los profetas, prometiéndoles el retorno de su reino de Jerusalén”.

On to another topic, a milestone in the coverage of the Polish-Jewish question in the Spanish press occurred on June 10, 1919 when four Jews living in the Spanish capital addressed a letter to ‘ABC’'s director expressing the “displeasure” they experienced when reading on this newspaper the articles written by Sofía Casanova on the (Polish) Jewish question, in which, in their view, it was seen that Casanova was “badly informed”. The authors of the letter argued the following:

“In such articles, although not inspired in a criterion frankly antisemite, quite the opposite, their author tries to show herself as impartial, statements are issued that, conditioned by means of caveats and clarifications, which set their relativity, may produce in the shallow audience that in its majority reads the newspapers the impression of a frank attack to the ideas, feelings and customs of Poland’s Israelites. The author of this articles has been, without a doubt, badly informed, she has paid attention to superstitious rumours, has hosted statements from passionate writers which have been denied, such as these referring to the ritual crime, reproduced in the article IX of the series. Because of all this, although the spirit and intention of the writer have not been to attack a race that, even if it is only because of having suffered so much, deserves all the respect, the setting of such articles turns out to be unfavourable not only for the Polish Jews, but for Jews in general, who feel united by well comprehensible feelings of solidarity”<sup>1605</sup>.

The letter was signed by Albert M. Esquenasi, Max Wolfowicz, Jose Farache<sup>1606</sup> and Aron Krauss”<sup>1607</sup>. It is worth highlighting that Abraham Shalom Yahuda, the leader of the Jewish community in Madrid, was not among the signers of the text sent to ‘ABC’, what in a way could diminish the letter’s intellectual and moral authority. Further research could try and find out why Yahuda was not among the authors and whether he agreed or not with them.

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<sup>1605</sup> “Una carta de los israelitas residentes en Madrid”, ‘ABC’, 10.06.1919, p. 9. Original quoted text: “En dichos artículos, aunque no inspirados en un criterio francamente antisemita—antes bien su autora procura mostrarse imparcial—se emiten afirmaciones que, condicionadas con salvedades y aclaraciones que fijan su relatividad, pueden producir en el público superficial en su mayoría que lee los periódicos la impresión de un franco ataque a las ideas, sentimientos y costumbres de los israelitas de Polonia. La autora de estos artículos ha sido, sin duda, mal informada, ha prestado oídos a rumores supersticiosos, ha acogido afirmaciones de escritores apasionados, que han sido desmentidas, como las referentes al crimen ritual, reproducidas en el artículo IX de la serie. Por todo esto, aunque el espíritu e intención de la escritora no hayan sido atacar a una raza que aunque no sea más que por haber sufrido tanto, merece todos los respetos, el conjunto de dichos artículos resulta desfavorable no sólo para los judíos polacos, sino para todos los judíos en general, que se sienten unidos por sentimientos de solidaridad bien comprensibles”.

<sup>1606</sup> Sephardi Jew from Gibraltar, linked to Pulido and Rafael Cansinos <https://historia-hispanica.rah.es/biografias/9957> [accesed 18.04.2023]

<sup>1607</sup> “Una carta de los israelitas residentes en Madrid”, ‘ABC’, 10.06.1919, p. 9.

Five days later, on June 15, 1919, on 'ABC', there was Sofía Casanova's response to the aforementioned letter written by the Madrid-based Jews, protesting against the correspondent's article series titled "Around armistice Europe. The Jewish Question" ("Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía"). In her response to these Jews, Casanova stated:

"I am not an antisemite and this statement, which here [in Spain], where the Hebraic problem doesn't exist, lacks meaning, it [this statement] has it [meaning], and really big, expressed for 25 years in antisemitic countries and among politicians who are enemies of the Judaic prevalence in their motherland. I do not think that the men who impeach me will find, among the war writers who are not openly their collaborators [Jew's collaborators], a single advocate like me, of the Jews, or [someone like me] who condemns the injustices suffered by them along the eastern fronts"<sup>1608</sup>.

Casanova also claimed that she did not believe in the credibility of rumours about a Jewish ritual crime taking place in Poland, which she regarded as "a legend" even "before the great rabbi of Warsaw, like a biblical sentence, denied to me the existence of this infamous practice". She added, as a reason not to believe in the existence of such practices in Poland, the fact that "the Hebraic fanaticism it is not bloody as it is proven by the fact the crime of passion almost does not exist among Jews in Poland and Russia". However, she mentioned that in Spain in 1910 there was the infamous Gádor crime, [in which a child was killed so that an ill man drank his blood to cure a disease, as a quack advised]<sup>1609</sup> and similar things could also happen in other countries due to "ignorance and superstition". In addition, she claimed that not everything in the Talmud was "sweetness and love"<sup>1610</sup>.

Regarding the native language spoken by Polish Jews, it is also worth mentioning that, on the one hand, Casanova described it as, "a sort of Hebraic Germanic dialect, a guttural slang which unpleasantly highlights the custom of speaking very loud, always gesturing"<sup>1611</sup>. On the

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<sup>1608</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía, XIII", 'ABC', 15.06.1919, p. 4. Original quoted text: "No soy antisemita, y esta afirmación que aquí, donde el problema hebreo no existe, carece de significación, la tiene y grandísima, hecha durante veinticinco años en países antisemitas y entre políticos enemigos del predominio judaico en su Patria. No creo encuentren los señores que me impugnan, entre los escritores de la guerra que no sean abiertamente sus colaboradores, uno solo defensor, como yo, de los judíos, o que condenen las injusticias sufridas por ellos a todo lo largo de los frentes orientales.

<sup>1609</sup> [https://www.ABC.es/espana/crimenes-extraordinarios/ABCi-crimen-gador-o-inconcebible-crueldad-humana-201711190124\\_noticia.html](https://www.ABC.es/espana/crimenes-extraordinarios/ABCi-crimen-gador-o-inconcebible-crueldad-humana-201711190124_noticia.html) [accessed 21.03.2023]

<sup>1610</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía, XIII", 'ABC', 15.06.1919, p. 4.

<sup>1611</sup> "Por la Europa del armisticio. La cuestión judía, VIII", 'ABC', 18.05.1919, p. 5.

other hand, Granzów regarded Yiddish as a dialect resulting from the mixture of German and Hebrew, and also regarded it as “one of the main ties that link the Jews in Europe’s East with Germany, probably the most important one”<sup>1612</sup>. He added that “the Zionists who protect this German dialect of the Jews in front of the allies make sure, without a doubt, to avoid saying that this is about protecting Germanism’s interests in Eastern Europe”<sup>1613</sup>.

In regard to Yiddish, and to how it was perceived in Polish society, Brzoza and Sowa explain that:

“On a daily basis, the vast majority of Polish Jews spoke only in its own language (Yiddish), originating from medieval South German dialects, but also saturated with accretions, among others from Hebrew and Slavic languages. For many years, it was neither by the majority of Polish society or by state authorities recognized as a separate language, but only as a German jargon”<sup>1614</sup>.

Finally, it is also worth mentioning that regarding the language usage in the Jewish quarters in Poland, Casanova also explained that: “in the Cracow ghetto, in which the Austrian complaisance allowed that signs and advertisements of warehouses and retail stores were written in Hebrew, I entered a few times to talk and know those anachronic lives in the very [process of] civilization”<sup>1615</sup>.

## Conclusions

It can be argued that Sofía Casanova, Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda and Ramiro de Maeztu had a very stereotypical view of Jews in general, and especially the first two writers presented such an image of Polish Jews, in particular. This stereotypical view was reflected on their comments on Polish Jews’ mindsets, behaviours and faith-based customs and traditions.

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<sup>1612</sup> “Polacos, alemanes y judíos II”, ‘La Correspondencia de España’, 16.07.1919, p. 1.

<sup>1613</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>1614</sup> C. Brzoza; A. Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945*, *op. cit.*, p. 131. Original quoted text: “Zdecydowana większość Żydów polskich posługiwała się na co dzień jedynie własnym językiem (jidysz), wywodzącym się ze średniowiecznych dialektów południowoniemieckich, ale nasyconym także naleciałościami, m.in. hebrajskimi i słowiańskimi”.

<sup>1615</sup> “Por la Europa del armisticio, la cuestión judía XIII”, ‘ABC’, 15.06.1919, p. 5. “ En el ghetto de Cracovia, en el que la condescendencia austriaca permitía escritos en hebreo los rótulos y los anuncios de almacenes y tiendas al por menor, me interné varias veces para hablar y conocer aquellas vidas anacrónicas en plena civilización”.

In Casanova's case, this is mostly seen in her comments on Poland's Orthodox Jews, to whom she referred as "Talmudic".

Sofía Casanova described Orthodox "Talmudic" and overall lower-class Polish Jews rather negatively, as a lower, underdeveloped civilization, and the Spanish writer described the areas where these Jews lived as out of that time, as stuck in the past. She conveyed the idea that these Jews had to be civilized and assimilated and that other upper class Polish Jews, more integrated in Polish society, had to take an important role in this assimilation process.

Casanova also referred to the boycott against Jewish traders, but did not refer to Poland's institutional anti-Jewish discrimination examples such as the ban on Sunday work<sup>1616</sup> or Jews' difficulties to obtain a job in public institutions<sup>1617</sup>. In her descriptions, Casanova focused mostly on Polish Jewish men and she did not write much on the lifestyles, mindsets, behaviours of Jewish women in Poland.

All the Spanish press editors, contributors and correspondents who referred to Polish Jews' autonomy demands were against conceding this autonomy to Poland's Israelites because of the bad social, political consequences this political freedom for the Jewish minority would bring with it.

The anti-Jewish violence events in Poland in late 1918 and in 1919 generated a big impact in the Spanish press that, on the one hand, led a group of Spanish intellectuals to send a complaint to the Polish National Committee, and, on the other hand, led such Committee to defend Poland's good name in Spain through the creation of a Polish Telegraphic Agency in the Iberian country.

In addition, regarding the Spanish press' reactions to the attacks suffered by Jews in the Polish lands, many press editors and contributors accused Poles for these violence episodes, but there were also reactions highlighting that German propaganda's goal to defame on Poland was behind the publication of exaggerated or misleading press notes in the Spanish press about pogroms in the new Polish state. Overall, it is difficult to claim, as an overview, if Spanish newspapers' editorial staffs were closer to give credibility to the published news about anti-Jewish violence in Poland, or were closer to Polish explanations, but it can be stated that opinions were divided. In addition, the publication of the note containing the complaint

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<sup>1616</sup> C. Brzoza; A.Sowa, *Historia Polski 1918-1945, op. cit.*, p. 134.

<sup>1617</sup> *Ibidem.*

telegram sent by the Spanish intellectuals to Dmowski cannot be interpreted automatically as a statement expressing total credibility by those editors to most foreign news published about attacks on Jews in Poland. What is clear is that many Spanish intellectuals and politicians believed such atrocities should have been and still should be prevented from happening by the new Polish state's authorities.



# FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RESEARCH RESULTS

## Final Conclusions

It is difficult to conclude a dissertation with such an incredibly large number of primary sources, by laying out specific results and statements. In many cases, the sources, even if abundant, have not allowed me to come up with clear conclusions. However, it is worth making an attempt to elaborate specific overall conclusions, based on the summaries and interpretations of primary and secondary sources presented in the four previous chapters.

The impacts and coverage of Polish affairs were larger in the Spanish press than the attention given to them by Spanish diplomats, with the exception of a few questions such as the League of Nations contingent to Vilna or the Polish-Soviet War.

The newspapers that dedicated most attention to the Polish question were 'La Correspondencia de España' and 'ABC'. However, all the selected newspapers contained many editorial texts or contributions on Polish affairs. The Spanish press contributors who dedicated more attention to Polish affairs were Sofía Casanova, by far in the leading role of opinion creation on Poland in the Spanish press, and Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda, who thanks to his work for Spain's diplomacy in Warsaw had access to very relevant information from Poland's Foreign Affairs ministry. Behind these Domingo Tejera (Schneider) and Javier Bueno (Azpeitua) deserve to be mentioned. Less often there were comments on Polish affairs by Francisco Martín Llorente (Armando Guerra), Corpus Barga, Alberto Insúa, and Ramiro de Maeztu. In the examined Spanish diplomacy sources Gutiérrez de Agüera is by far the author of most of the diplomatic letters or reports analysed in this project, followed by Gomez Contreras and the ambassadors and *chargés d'affaires* in Russia (until 1917), Germany and France.

It must be also underlined that throughout the whole researched period, some of the top Spanish intellectuals of the time made references to Polish affairs in their contributions to Spanish newspapers. Among them, Ramiro de Maeztu, Salvador de Madariaga, Jose María Salaverría, Isaac Muñoz, and even Valle Inclán must be listed. In addition, foreign intellectuals residing in Spain like Pole Tadeusz Peiper and Hungarian András Révész also discussed the Polish questions in their articles written for the Spanish press. This tells us that Polish affairs

were not seen as something so remote and unimportant by Spanish intellectuals, as one could have thought before conducting this research.

One could argue that much romanticism and mysticism, including many references to divine justice, can be seen in the Spanish press comments on the Polish Question during the Great War (although also economic, political, strategic and social aspects), whereas once Poland became independent most Spanish comments on Polish affairs were focused on economic, social, geopolitical and strategic realities of the new state, as well as on the Great Powers' role in Polish questions, what left less place to abstract concepts such as romanticism, heroism and destiny. However, a romantic view of Poland after 1918 is seen, at least partially, on Sofía Casanova's articles.

The pre-research hypothesis that Spanish diplomats regarded positively the fact that, because of the war, Poland was to become an independent state, has been confirmed by the research, particularly by diplomatic correspondence by the end of the conflict or after the conflict. However, it is difficult to write about a generalised standard view on the Polish question among all the diplomats whose reports have been checked in this work.

The pre-research hypothesis that Spaniards at the time saw Poland and Russia as part of the same people has been discarded by the research. Despite a large part of the Polish lands being part of the Russian Empire until 1915, and many Poles fighting in the Russian army, during the Great War period, in Spain, Poland was perceived as a different entity than Russia, and Poles were regarded as a separate nation, despite particular exceptional situations in which Spanish journalists or Poles living in Spain had to clarify that Poles and Russians were different. It is clear that already by the end of the war and in the post-war period, in the Spanish imaginary Russia and Poland already were two separate entities.

It must be also underlined that very often the term 'Poland' was used by Spanish newspapers and their contributors to refer to Congress (Russian) Poland, without including Galicia, Greater Poland, Upper Silesia, Eastern Galicia and the Vilna region in their reference to "Poland". In 1919 many Spanish newspapers, and even Sofía Casanova in her contributions, still made a distinction between 'Poland' and (Western) 'Galicia', in those cases by 'Poland' referring to the former Russian partition lands. The reunion of the partitioned Polish lands was a new reality that was not yet totally mentally assimilated in Spain in the aftermath of the Great War.

During the November 1918-March 1921 period, views on Polish affairs in the press and in Spanish diplomacy were strongly influenced by views on the Entente's and especially on France's foreign policy, and more specifically on this country's Eastern European policy. In relation to this, it must be highlighted that the Germanophile press, and this is particularly visible in the case of 'ABC', took advantage of every opportunity given by the territorial disputes which the new Polish state faced to criticise the Entente's policies and actions to resolve these disputes, as well as the new order that the Entente created in post-war Europe. More specifically, the Germanophile conservative press in Spain strongly criticized France's support to Poland in most of the territorial conflicts the new state had to face. Overall, it can be stated that in Spain, Germanophile newspapers were more critical of Poland in regard to the country's territorial ambitions and management of border conflicts than the pro-Entente press was. Furthermore, the conservative press, overall, also including rather pro-allied or neutral newspapers, such as 'La Correspondencia de España', 'La Época' and 'El Imparcial', became more critical towards Poland's territorial ambitions during the 1918-1921 period.

Many of the 1919 texts in the Spanish press that dealt with Polish affairs had titles or contexts connected to the post-armistice international relations reality in Europe since November 11, 1918, and after the signature of the Versailles Peace Treaty, these titles were connected with the new reality brought about by peace. This is an indication that Poland, with all its complex territorial disputes, was internationally seen as a product and a result of the war in Europe, as a new political entity that showed itself in a moment when the armistice status reigned the relations between states in the Old Continent. This also indicates that in the Spanish press, Polish affairs very often were seen as part of global or European affairs resulting from the war, and not as regional Eastern European or local Polish affairs.

Whereas Sofía Casanova and Casimiro Granzów commented on Polish affairs, by understanding these mainly as purely Polish, most Spanish press contributors and editors looked at Polish affairs through their perspective on French, British, German affairs or on the global political events with worldwide impacts. In other words, for most Spanish contributors what really mattered was the Powers' stances on Polish affairs. In their diplomatic reports, Gomez Contreras and Gutiérrez de Agüera looked at Polish questions as Polish questions but used a more Great Power-focused perspective in their comments than Casanova and Granzów did in the Spanish press.

In fact, Gutiérrez de Agüera was extremely focused on France's, and into a lesser extent, England's Eastern European policies, and also on these countries' concrete policies towards the external and internal conflicts the new Polish state faced in the period 1919-1921.

The comment by Spanish chargé d'affaires in Warsaw Gomez Contreras on Poles generally not getting credit for their obtained independence, and others being credited for this, instead, can also be applied to Spain's views on Polish affairs in the aftermath of the Great War, although only to a certain extent. As a matter of fact, it can be claimed that despite the Spanish press' and diplomats' overall sympathy for the Polish cause, sometimes Polish independence was seen by Spanish newspapers and contributors (not by diplomats) as a result of external factors, the German-Austrian creation of the Polish Kingdom, the defeats of the Partition Powers in the war and the Entente's support of the Polish cause in the last phase of the war. Thus, sometimes in Spain Poland's independence was not perceived as a result of the Poles' own role as fighters in the war and the Poles' activism throughout the conflict.

The pre-research hypothesis that Germanophile and pro-Russian Spanish press editors and contributors preferred a territorially small Poland, rather than a largely extending to the East Polish state, has been confirmed by the research. In the case of those Spanish journalists who supported a territorially extended Poland, these rather supported the idea of a federation of states including Poland: not only including the territories that made up the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the West fringe of the Russian Empire, but also other models such as federation with Southern and Western Slavs, or even including Romania and Hungary.

In addition, the pre-research hypothesis that the Spanish press was mostly in favour of a new Polish state that would include all the lands predominantly inhabited by Poles, has been clearly refused by the research. Germanophile newspapers and their correspondents or contributors were generally against Poland's possession of Greater Poland and Upper Silesia's regions inhabited mostly by Poles and of the plebiscite region of Warmia-Masuria, in other words, lands predominantly inhabited by Poles that were part of the German Empire until the Great War.

It must be highlighted that in the period from May 1919 to March 1921, when diplomatic relations between Poland and the Kingdom of Spain had already been launched, Spanish state ministers rarely replied to the reports sent *via* letter or telegram from the Spanish legation in Warsaw by chargé d'affaires Gomez Contreras and later, by plenipotentiary minister Gutiérrez de Agüera. This tells us that some of the Polish affairs might be important for Spain's diplomacy but probably with the exception of the Vilna question, none of them was crucial for Spain's State Ministry. The conflict faced by Poland with more political consequences for Spain was the Polish-Lithuanian conflict over Vilna and the second one with more direct consequences for Spanish diplomacy, was the Danzig question, due to the rifles' factory question. The third one was the Polish-Czechoslovakian conflict due to the challenges the Czechoslovakian

communications blockade brought to Spanish diplomacy concerning communications between Warsaw and Madrid. However, the conflict that potentially could have had more consequences in Spain was the Polish-Soviet War, due to the social unrest the Iberian country experienced since 1917, partly due to the influence of the Bolshevik revolution.

In the period of the reborn independent Poland 1918-1921 it is seen that in Spain's diplomacy, Poland's territorial and armed conflicts to determine its new borders and the Western Powers' roles in these conflicts were the main point of interest. In addition, a lot of attention was paid by the Spanish press comments in regard to the territorial disputes and conflicts involving Poland, to ethnographic and demographic aspects. Spanish press editors, correspondents and contributors made an effort to provide their readers with data on the amounts and percentages of different ethnic groups in the disputed regions and they often based their arguments in favour or against of certain resolutions to the conflicts on these ethnographic or demographic realities. Often these arguments compared or combined the ethnographic aspects with the historical ones.

Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda was one of the press contributors on Polish affairs who most often referred to ethnographic aspects, in most cases to support the Polish claims of the disputed territories. He certainly included ethnographic data or observations more often than Sofía Casanova. In his contributions to the Spanish press Granzów very often, also used historical arguments to advocate the Polishness of disputed regions and Poland's entitlements to possess or to have an important influence on these territories. This is clearly seen in his comments about Danzig, Upper Silesia and Warmia-Masuria.

As a matter of fact, different views and analysis angles on the question of the Polish borders overall are seen across the press and diplomacy sources. While 'ABC's Germanophile contributor Domingo Tejera (R. Schneider) was against the borders of new Poland being based on historical reasons, Sofía Casanova claimed Poland's Western borders would depend on the solution to the German question by the Entente, whereas Granzów de la Cerda used both ethnographic and historical arguments to advocate borders favourable to Poland and Agüera paid attention to ethnographic, economic and strategic arguments, and above all, to the Entente's policies and views. However, Agüera clearly based his opinion, favourable to Poland, regarding the territorial conflicts of Cieszyn Silesia and Vilna on the ethnographic reality of the disputed regions. In addition, Tadeusz Peiper saw a change of stand in the Entente in 1919 from historical to ethnographic principles taken into account to establish borders.

The pre-research hypothesis that in the Spanish press there would not be analogies and comparisons between Poland's territorial disputes and episodes of Spanish history, due to the absence of significant border conflicts in Spanish history has been proven at least partially wrong by this research. In the Spanish press of the time comparisons were made between Poland's independence and the Reconquista, between the Polish-Lithuanian conflict and the wars Spain faced in Northern Africa, and more specifically, between the Spanish attitude in the North African Uarga (Ouergha River) Valley, where Spain allowed France to take control of the region, with the Poles' energetic attitude of protest in relation to the assignment to Ukraine of the Chelm region in the 1918 Brest-Litovsk treaty between the Central Powers and Ukraine. According to press contributor Martín Llorente, Spanish politicians should have behaved like the Polish ones did in 1918 in front of the Central Powers.

In addition, a large focus and attention on geopolitical aspects is seen across the examined Spanish primary sources, both in the press and in diplomatic correspondence, although this is more visible in the former. In particular, Spanish press editors, commentators and diplomats gave much importance to the geopolitical significance, causes and consequences of Poland's border conflicts, which is specially visible in the cases of the Warmo-Masurian, Eastern Galicia, Upper Silesian and Polish-Soviet conflicts. In addition, during the Great War period a big focus by Spanish press editors and contributors is seen on commenting the geopolitical reasons behind Germany's (and into a lesser extent Austria-Hungary's) decisions and actions during the war, something that gets very clear in regard to the question of the November 5 Proclamation. Furthermore, both during the Great War and during the period of November 1918-March 1921, the time of conflicts to establish Poland's borders, several references to Poland's geopolitical role ( its own, the one imposed by the Entente or the one ambitioned by the country's leaders), in many of its aspects, are seen across the examined Spanish sources. Poland's geopolitical role as a barrier, a buffer state or a wall, either against Imperial Russia or Soviet Russia, as the protector of Western Civilization, or against the Germanic world, as a protector of Slavs and of France's interests against Pan-Germanism, was emphasized both during the Great War and during the Polish-Soviet War by a few Spanish press editors and contributors. Nevertheless, most comments on this question revolved around the idea that Poland geopolitical role was or should be to protect Europe, the West and Christianity from Russian (often seen as Asian) barbarism.

Many references to the economic significance of regions in dispute between Poland and either Germany (Upper Silesia) or Czechoslovakia (Cieszyn Silesia) or Ukraine (Eastern

Galicia) are also seen both in the press and diplomatic correspondence examined sources throughout the researched period. In relation to economic aspects, it can also be highlighted that the Germanophile Spanish press repeatedly used the argument that the inhabitants of territories in dispute between Poland and Germany, namely and mainly Upper Silesia, Eastern Prussia (Warmia and Masuria) and Greater Poland, had reasons to want to remain in Germany because Germans were a guarantee of a better economic administration and of more prosperity than Poles.

A considerable part of the Spanish press did not see the Polish-Bolshevik War either as a regional eastern European war, or as a conflict generated by the territorial dispute between Poles and Bolsheviks on the historical Polish-Lithuanian Eastern borderlands, but rather as a conflict between Western Civilization and Bolshevism, whose result would have far-reaching consequences in the whole continent.

The Polish-Lithuanian conflict over Vilna was a matter of great importance to the Spanish diplomacy in 1920 and 1921. Spain, at the request of the League of Nations, approved to contribute with its navy to an international contingent that had to guarantee the celebration of a plebiscite in Vilna to determine whether the region belonged to Poland or Lithuania. This decision by Eduardo Dato's government generated a wave of criticism in part of the Spanish press, which had also condemned the take of Vilna by the forces of Polish General Lucjan Żeligowski. Agüera interpreted the development of the conflict for the Ministry of State while Spanish diplomats and military sought a solution to it within the League of Nations. The mediation failed, the plebiscite did not take place and eventually the Spanish troops were not sent to Vilna.

Many Spanish comments portrayed Poland and Poles as being in a higher civilization level than Russians, Lithuanians and Ukrainians. Some also portrayed Poland, as an inferior civilization level than Germany. Many of the Spanish press comments, mainly by Casanova but only by her, portray Orthodox Jews in Poland as an outdated civilization.

The movement conducted by Spanish politician Angel Pulido in the first quarter of 20<sup>th</sup> century to rediscover Spain's ties with the Jews and to approach Spain to the Sephardic Jewish world, also increased the interest in Spain in the Polish-Jewish question, as seen in the amount of comments by Spain's press contributors on this question. Most comments on Jewish questions in Poland, apart from the anti-Jewish violence episodes in Poland in late 1918 and 1919, focused on assimilating Jews within Polish society, political system and legal system as well as on the socio-economic role of Jews in Poland.

Most of the researched Spanish press editors, contributors and correspondents that referred to the Polish-Jewish question in the examined period were against Jewish autonomism and isolationism in Poland, and were rather in favour of integration, assimilation, or at least political patronage of the Jews under the Polish state. In addition, pro-Zionist comments among Spanish journalists and diplomats were only made by Rafael Cansinos Assens.

Despite Pulido's philosemitic campaign in Spain, in most of the examined Spanish primary sources on the Polish-Jewish question, a predominant philosemitism is not perceived and most comments were distant from a purely pro-Jewish perspective, and rather looked at the best scenarios for the new Polish state, Europe and Western Christian Civilization. However, it is true that much concern was expressed by many newspapers and contributors on the situation of Jews in Poland, due to the news about pogroms in the reborn country that arrived in Spain. Indeed, many comments in the press were critical of Poland due to the anti-Jewish violence attacks occurring in the new state and blamed its politicians or military command leaders.

Both the anti-Jewish violence events at the beginning of the new Polish Republic's existence, and, into a lesser extent, Poland's attitude in the conflict over Vilna, damaged reborn Poland's reputation and good name in Spain. If during the Great War, in Spain Poland was synonym of only positive values as freedom, liberation, unity, faith, in the first years of Poland's independence a considerable part of the Spanish press, and into a much lesser extent Spanish diplomacy, during certain periods and in certain contexts associated Poland to violence, chaos, antisemitism, unrest, excessive ambition, militarism, *fait accompli* and Imperialism.

Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera placed a lot of attention and emphasis in his diplomatic reports to State Minister on the episodes of violence that occurred in the context of the territorial conflicts the new Polish state had to face (not of violence against Jews, since when he started reporting to State Minister as plenipotentiary minister in early 1920, the main anti-Jewish violence episodes had finished). Agüera reported on the violence suffered by both Poles and citizens from other nationalities (committed by Poles). This particular focus by Agüera on this topic is especially visible in the Upper Silesia, Warmia-Masuria and Cieszyn Silesia questions.

Despite few references to Catholic Poland in the Spanish press, this dissertations' pre-research hypothesis that shared Catholicism, as a linking element between both nations made that many Spanish press editors and contributors who were aligned with Catholic values, had a positive view about Poland has not been confirmed through research. The Catholic thread is



only found in certain Spanish press comments on Poland, and often Spaniards writing about the country referred to it as a Latin country, Spain's brother country or a friendly country.

Piłsudski's image presented in the Spanish press and in the diplomatic reports, despite many different views with different angles in different contexts by different Spanish observers, is, making a generalizing overview, of a romantic, a leader, a liberator, a hero, a humble and mystic person, a lucky person and also a dictator. Also, he is presented as a powerful and prestigious leader, although this image was reverted during the difficult period of the Polish-Soviet War. When reading all the references to Piłsudski one realizes there were many reasons in Spain to be fascinated about Piłsudski. The Polish leader represented a kind of leading politician, with a level of charisma and influential leadership that probably Spain did not have at the time and had not had for many years, and didn't have until Primo de Rivera's dictatorship.

On the other hand, references to Roman Dmowski—an unquestionably leading figure in Polish politics—in the Spanish press comments on Poland in the period 1918-1921 are not abundant, but in most cases are richly detailed. More references to Dmowski are found in the examined Spanish diplomatic correspondence than in the press sources. The image of Dmowski presented in the Spanish press and diplomatic reports is this of a leader, a party man, a statesman, an intellectual, but also as an obsessive antisemite. In fact, it can be claimed that Dmowski's image reflected in the examined press sources and diplomatic correspondence is positive with the exception of Dmowski's antisemitism.

It is clearly visible that Piłsudski generated more comments than Dmowski throughout the researched period in the Spanish press. In addition, it seems clear that Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera had less interest in or fascination with Dmowski than with Piłsudski or Paderewski. One could claim this was not completely fair if one considers Dmowski's enormous contribution to the Polish cause, in general, and to the creation and development of the new Polish state under the Entente's auspice, in particular. Furthermore, it is important to remark that the most knowledgeable and probably the most influential contributor/correspondent on Polish affairs in the examined research period, Sofía Casanova, clearly expressed her admiration both for Piłsudski and Dmowski. However, across the analysed sources it is visible that Casanova's views on Poland were closer to Dmowski's than to Piłsudski's.

Although it is quite risky to make such a statement, the examined sources overall indicate that despite Spain's conservative press, and specially Germanophile press opposition to a strong, extended Poland—also in the form of a federation as Piłsudski conceived it, and taking into account the views expressed by Spanish diplomats—the Spanish press and

diplomacy were a bit more oriented towards Piłsudski's conception of Poland rather than to Dmowski's. Certainly, overall comments in the Spanish press and diplomatic reports indicate a preference for a Poland with non-isolated national minorities and working as a buffer state in the East against Bolshevism.

Comments on Polish history by both Spanish press contributors/correspondents and diplomats, especially in the case of the former, were generally well-researched, accurate and full of details, but were often presented with a certain bias due to a particular purpose or intention, generally to support certain arguments. Some of the main periods these historical comments focused on were Kościuszko's insurrections, the creation of the Duchy of Warsaw, the Partitions, with special focus on the treatment of Poles under the three Partitioning Powers, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the times of Kazimierz the Great. Often these historical references were used by Spanish journalists and diplomats to support or reject Poland's or Poland's neighbouring nations' entitlement to possess a disputed territory.

Many predictions were made by press editors, contributors and correspondents, as well as by Agüera, on the resolutions of Poland's territorial disputes and conflicts and the future of the new Polish state. Also, during the Great War many predictions are seen on the solution for an independent Poland, and the shape, structures, alliances and role the new state would have. Many predictions by Spaniards were correct but even more were proven wrong by time.

The League of Nations, in connection with Polish affairs, was, logically, a bigger subject in the examined diplomatic reports than in the Spanish press, due to Spanish diplomacy's involvement in the international organization, as a member state. Only in regard to the Vilna question and to a lesser extent the Danzig Free City, was the League of Nations' role as a mediator in territorial disputes commented on Spanish press comments. In the case of the Polish-Lithuanian conflicts, many Spanish press comments were critical of the League's role, precisely at the beginning of the institution's functioning period.

It can be argued that the League of Nations, an institution created to bring peace, also by means of opposing or hampering imperialism in the post-Great War world order, and created as a result of a brutal global war caused by the clash of several imperialisms, was seen by conservative newspapers in Spain as a supporter of Polish and French imperialisms.

An average Spanish press reader of 1920, after reading most comments on international affairs could get the impression that Imperialism and imperialist ambitions among Great Powers, transformed Great Powers such as Russia, or among emerging regional powers such as Poland, were not dead after the Great War. In addition, a bigger sensitivity against imperialist

attitudes after 1918 may be perceived in the Spanish press as a result of the war, at least based on the examined press sources in this dissertation. It can be also concluded that on the eyes of certain Spanish press correspondents and contributors, Poland's territorial ambitions, especially those focused on the East, as well as Soviet Russia's ambitious expansion to the West, were examples of imperialist policies. As seen in the letters sent by Prince Władysław Lubomirski to the Spanish king, certain Polish leaders were concerned about the Polish eastern policy being seen in the West as imperialist, and the research here conducted proved this concern was justified.

The examined press and diplomatic correspondence sources in this project overall show that among Spaniards (both influential journalists or columnists and experienced diplomats) reborn Poland in the period November 1918-March 1921 was seen as a fragile new independent state, with a weak economy, full of misery, suffering the consequences of the destruction brought by the war, very dependent on the Entente, in a permanent unstable situation, fighting with all the neighbouring nations because of both its high territorial ambitions, backed by the Entente's support, and its revengeful and dangerous neighbours, and suffering from strong internal political divisions. Poland was regarded as a weak country with a strong but internally questioned leader, Piłsudski. Overall, Poland was not yet a true regional power, but rather a new state that had the ambition to become one. The reborn Polish republic was seen in Spain as a convenient buffer state against a strong Germany (especially for France) and a strong Russia. Poland was seen as a French product, created by taking advantage of the war, which intended to recover its glorious past, and attempted, without much success, to recreate the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Reborn Poland was also seen as something in a provisional status, which could be gone in any given moment, although after Poland's victory against the Bolsheviks in 1920 it was clear in Spain that Poland was not gone, it had come back to stay, as another full-right guest in the post-war European table. In a way, it can seem into a certain extent paradoxical that despite Spanish journalists and diplomats, seeing that reborn Poland was so fragile, the former in some cases accused the new state of imperialist attitudes, and the latter saw existing ground for others (Spanish journalists, other states) accusing Poland of Imperialism. One would think that all these Spaniards would easily realize Poland was too weak to practice a true imperialist foreign policy, despite movements easily depictable as Imperialist in Vilna or Eastern Galicia, and into a lesser extent in the case of the Polish offensive in Ukraine. In a time when Spain was still trying to find its place in the world after recently having lost most of its remaining Empire, a moment during which many in Spain surely had nostalgia for the lost Empire and some even dreamed about recovering it one day, perhaps it was too easy to

fall into the conviction that Poland, unlike Spain, was not completely entitled to become a (regional) Empire.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

### Answered research questions

The answers to the main research questions established before conducting the research are the following:

**-What were the main trends in Spain's media, political and diplomatic circles during the Great War and in the period 1918-1921 regarding perceptions on the Polish question, on Polish independence movements and the creation and territorial formation of the new Polish state, as well as new Poland's national minorities?**

In the Great War period Spanish newspapers claimed Poland's resurrection was a matter of justice, highlighted the Poles' fight for their freedom during the Partitions, mainly the Kościuszko, November and January Uprisings, and saw different possibilities or scenarios for Polish independence, mostly depending on the newspapers' orientations towards the war sides. Germanophile newspapers praised the creation of the Polish kingdom and its institutions by the Central Powers and in these they saw the path for an independent Poland, whereas pro-allied newspapers did not see this German-Austrian project for Poland as a solution that would lead to Polish independence. Spanish top politicians were in favour of Poland being reborn, as were most Spanish press contributors, correspondents and intellectuals who referred to the Polish question.

Not many comments predicted a fully independent Poland, without direct governmental control by any power. Spain's diplomacy made sure that Spain did not engage with any solution for the Polish question that came from any of the belligerent side. The November 5 Proclamation generated many political and diplomatic reactions around the continent that were covered by Spain's ambassadors in Petrograd and Berlin, among other Spanish diplomats. In Spain there was a big awareness on the difficult socio-economic situation that the Polish lands were facing and this is why charity campaigns to support Poland were organized.

In the November 1918-March 1921 period Spanish diplomacy had a Poland foreign policy that was very aligned with the Entente's, and particularly with France's. Spanish press

commented on Poland's conflicts with neighbouring nations with lots of attention and including many details. In regard to the Greater Poland Uprising, most comments highlighted Germany's incapacity to stop the uprising due to Germany's revolution-induced instability and the fact the Entente intended to assign this territory to Poland in the treaty resulting from the Paris Peace Conference. Regarding the Upper Silesian conflict, Spanish newspapers highlighted the economic significance of the disputed region. When it comes to the Cieszyn Silesia conflict, most comments pointed at Poland's entitlement to take the region.

Germanophile comments highlighted benefits for local populations in Upper Silesia, Greater Poland and Warmia-Masuria of living within Germany instead of Poland and by means of historical, economic, geopolitical arguments advocated Germany's entitlement to possess all these areas the Entente in their view, didn't want Germany to possess.

A big focus was placed across newspapers on the Upper Silesian plebiscite preparations, predictions and results, as well as on the violence episodes taking place in the disputed region. Moreover, the role of German migrants vote was highlighted in many comments regarding the upper Silesia plebiscite and also the Warmia and Masuria plebiscite.

Different views in regard to the rights Poland acquired over Danzig and its port are seen across the Spanish press, from those press editors or contributors who believed Danzig should be German and Poland was not entitled to access the sea, to those who believed the access to the sea and control over the city given to Poland in Versailles was not enough, such as Granzów and Casanova. Agüera, on the other hand, saw it completely differently and believed that Poland, in fact, obtained a good deal in Danzig from the Versailles Peace Treaty.

An enormous amount of criticism from newspapers across orientations and ideological perspectives was generated by Żeligowski's occupation of the Vilna region and also, addressed to Spain's government and diplomacy as well, by the fact Spain and other members of the League of Nations would send their troops to Vilna in a contingent that had to ensure the plebiscite took place safely and in the proper conditions. Similar criticism of the first event, not the second, was made by Spain's top diplomatic representative in Poland Gutiérrez de Agüera.

Less criticised in Spain than the actions in the Polish-Lithuanian conflict, was Poland's attempt to take Ukraine out from Bolshevik hands in the Polish offensive in Ukraine. Most comments on this conflict, on the one hand, highlighted the importance for Europe's sake of a Polish victory and, on the other hand, feared Bolshevik expansion to the West, even though a comment complained about the critical stand of certain Germanophile press contributors

towards Poland in relation to the war with the Bolsheviks. Gutiérrez de Agüera *in situ* initially did not see a solution to the conflict as possible, feared for the survival of reborn Poland and was not convinced by the Treaty of Riga as a solution. Neither was Sofía Casanova.

The Polish-Ukrainian conflict over Eastern Galicia generated reactions in the Spanish press rather oriented towards favouring a Polish control of the disputed territory, despite recognition of the region complex ethnographic reality. A description of the military developments was made by press commentators. It must also be highlighted that a large focus on the geopolitical and economic significance of the region is also found in the examined sources.

Most Spanish newspapers propagated, reflected and some also commented on the anti-Jewish violence in the new Polish state during its first months of existence. Many comments accused Poland's *legionists* and officers of being responsible for the massacres, whereas others regarded these news reporting violence against Jews as German propaganda. Most comments on the Polish-Jewish question across newspapers highlighted the challenges Jews generated in the reborn state due to their demands for isolation and autonomy.

### **-How important were Polish affairs in the Spanish press?**

The enormous amount of sources encountered in the examined press articles on Polish affairs proves that even if the Polish question was not one of the top 3 international affairs questions throughout the examined period, it was one of the top 8, and indeed had a lot of impact in Spain and a great visibility in the Spanish press. It can be also stated that Polish affairs had a larger impact in the Spanish press in the Great War period than in the November 1918-March 1921 period. During the War the Polish question was one of the top 5 international affairs questions in the Spanish press.

The fact that a renowned writer like Sofía Casanova wrote about Polish affairs so often on 'ABC', and renowned correspondents such as Corpus Barga or Antonio Muñoz, and prestigious intellectuals such as Ramiro de Maeztu also discussed Polish affairs remarkably increased the visibility of Polish affairs in Spain's press, and therefore in the country. In addition, an average press reader in Spain in the years 1914 to 1921 could easily get a detailed view of what was going on regarding the Polish question during the Great War and the conflicts and challenges the reborn Polish state experienced in the aftermath of the global conflict.

**-What level of understanding did Spanish press editors, contributors and correspondents have of the complex Polish political, ethnical and territorial affairs?**

The level of understanding of Polish affairs in the Spanish press was generally high, particularly in the case of certain correspondents and contributors. However, it seems clear that despite presenting often very elaborated editorial comments on Polish affairs, on certain occasions editorial staff in the newspapers based their comments on Polish affairs into a large extent on published foreign telegraphic press notes and not so much on correspondents' reporting and own knowledge. In regard to Spanish diplomacy it can be stated that both Gomez Contreras and Gutiérrez de Agüera (from whom a way larger amount of diplomatic reports are available as primary sources than from Contreras), with some gaps in particular questions, showed a high level of understanding on Polish affairs.

**-How complex, deep and detailed were the analyses on Poland written by Spanish press contributors and diplomats?**

The most detailed and deepest comments on Polish affairs in the Spanish press were written by Sofía Casanova and Casimiro Granzów de la Cerda since both knew Polish reality first hand because of living or having lived in the Polish lands. Spain's plenipotentiary, Tejera's and Bueno's comments on 'ABC' also showed an extremely deep level of analysis on Polish affairs. From his side, Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera reported on Polish affairs with an extremely high level of detail, as did his predecessor in charge of the Spanish legation, Gómez Contreras, although the latter into a lesser extent.

**-How did the Spanish press editors' and correspondents' stands on England, France, the United States and Germany determine their stands on Polish affairs?**

Spanish diplomacy's views on Polish affairs in the period November 1918-March 1921 were clearly determined by France's and Great Britain's views on these. Spain's diplomacy was very careful not to go against or beyond the stands of the Entente, and was closely aligned with the French stand (one might think this could have been specially visible during the functioning of Romanones' liberal government, December 1918-May 1919, but this attitude is also visible outside this period). It must be underlined Agüera's views on the Polish-Soviet war were closer to the French stand than to the British stand, but Agüera was very supportive of British policies in the Danzig Free City.

**-Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors mostly in favour of Poland resurging as a state or kingdom as a result of the Great War?**

A generally positive view of the Polish nation, culture, mindset and history was conveyed by the Spanish newspapers both in the Great War period and in the first years of Polish independence, but especially in the Great War period. An exception was Javier Bueno (Antonio Azpeitua) and his sharp criticism of Poles in 1918.

There were differences regarding the shape, protecting Power, and borders of an independent Poland but generally Spanish press editors, contributors and correspondents were in favour of the creation of an independent Poland. Most Spanish press criticism of Poland was focused on the country's foreign policy, territorial ambitions, and dependence on France, as well as its treatment of Jews, and not on the essence of Polish nation.

In Spanish diplomacy, as per the examined sources, the expression of support to the Polish cause is somehow visible but was less clear than in the Spanish press during the Great War period. This changed when diplomatic relations between both states were established in 1919 and the Spanish diplomats, namely Gómez Contreras and mostly Gutiérrez de Agüera, reported to State Minister from Spain's legation in Warsaw. Despite clear criticism of certain Polish policies and attitudes, the Spanish diplomats in Warsaw showed clearly their support for the development and consolidation of the new Polish state.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors believe an independent Poland would arise as a result of the war?**

The Polish question was seen as one of the issues the war would resolve, and when the November 5 Proclamation occurred, certain editors and commentators saw it as the way to resolve it, while others didn't see it in such a way. Most pro-allied editors and contributors believed in the solution for an independent Poland was the offered by the Great Duke on behalf of the Tsar in 1914, and by the end of the war the one offered by Wilson, to be materialised with an allied victory. When it comes to Spanish diplomacy, with the consulted sources it is difficult to determine if Spanish diplomats believed Poland would be really independent when the war finished. However, it is extremely important to remark that most Spanish press comments believed Poland would be an independent political entity by the end of the war, but under a certain level of control of the Powers, so in most comments there are no clear references to a fully independent Poland.

**-Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland containing lands from the three Partitions?**



Certain Germanophile contributors were against this conception of an independent Poland containing territories from the German partition as well, whereas pro-allied and neutral rather in favour of a completely reunited Poland. During the first phase of the war most pro-allied contributors and editors desired a reunited Poland under Russian patronage, and some of them, such as Ramiro de Maeztu, expected this to happen. Later in the war pro-allied commentators of the Polish question expressed their support for the project of a reunited Poland. The diplomatic correspondence sources do not show so clearly this positive stand on an independent Poland with the three reunited partitioned Polish lands during the war but this stand is seen once the war was over.

**-Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland being born under the auspice of the Entente?**

Despite Spain's diplomacy trying to protect the country's neutrality during the Great War, a certain *pro-alliedness* is attributed to Spain's foreign policy by scholars, and can be perceived in the examined diplomatic correspondence, but the two November 1916 replies to Russia's ambassador in Spain Koudacheff—one regarding Spain's stand in terms of a recognition of the Polish kingdom proclaimed on the November 5 Proclamation, the second about checking if Russian nationals of Polish nationality—had been recruited for the Central Powers' armies, proved Spain didn't want to show any engagement in neither of the belligerent sides, neither in regard to the belligerent's political solutions for Poland. Spain played diplomatically truly as a neutral country in relation to the three Empires that hand Poland's future at stake, despite visible Spanish diplomacy's preference for the Entente. This preference is perceived more clearly after the war, particularly in some of Agüera's reports and Contreras's aforementioned report from October 15, 1919 about Poland's obtained independence during the war and the treatment of Poland by the Entente.

**-Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland being born within Russia?**

Pro-allied editors and contributors were in favour of the solution for Poland presented by the Great Duke in August 1914, whereas Germanophile editors and contributors were obviously in favour of a Central Power's solution for Poland, the one presented on November 5, 1916. Despite Poland being generally associated with Russia in Spain, and despite the Great

Duke's proclamation in August 1914, certain pro-allied editors, contributors and correspondents were against a Polish dependence on Russia. At the beginning of the war, Casanova argued in favour of a Russian solution for an independent Poland and against a German solution. In Spanish diplomatic correspondence it is seen that Garrido Cisneros in Petrograd criticised Russia's government for not trying to offer Poles an alternative to the November 5 proclamation, what can be interpreted that he wanted at that point Poland to be independent under the Russian auspice, and not under the Austrian-German one.

**-Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland being born in association with the Central Powers?**

Germanophile newspapers supported the German-Austrian project for Poland, announced on November 5, 1916. Already during and after the Great War the Spanish Germanophile press saw Poland's independence as a result of Germany's effort to create a Polish kingdom and Polish institutions. In other words, these opinion creators attributed to Germany, even more than to the very Poles, the appearance of a Polish independent state in 1918. For them a Poland born out of the Central Powers was the best solution for the Polish question.

**-Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland being born under the auspice of the Western allies?**

Pro-allied newspapers and contributors supported this conception, Sofía Casanova also did. At the beginning of the war, Casanova, despite criticism of Russia, supported a new Poland under Russia's auspice. More commentators saw a Poland under the Central Powers' influence or protected by the allies than politically under Russia. After November 1917, logically no one among press commentators and editors believed Poland would reunite and have an independent political life under Russia. In Spanish diplomacy a preference for a Poland born under the auspice of the Entente is seen but rather *a posteriori*, and not during the War.

**-Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland resembling the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and expanding to the East, in line with Pilsudski's federalist view?**

Many Spanish newspapers' editors or press contributors, both liberal and conservatives, both Germanophile and pro-Entente (although much more visible among the Germanophiles),

were against the reborn Poland resembling the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and especially being a very expanded to the East state.

**-Were Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors in favour of an independent Poland where only ethnic Poles would live?**

Some Spaniards analysing the conceptions and borders of the new Polish state were in favour of this view of Poland whereas others such as Casanova understood into a certain extent the strategy of attempting to control lands beyond the ethnographic borders where Poles were a minority, mainly in the Eastern borderlands.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors want Greater Poland to be part of the new Polish state or they wanted it to be part of Germany?**

The Spanish liberal pro-allied press highlighted German oppression of Poles under the German partition and positioned itself generally favourable to Polish interests when analysing the territorial conflicts between Poland and Germany. Spanish Germanophile editors, contributors or correspondents were mainly against Poland taking the predominantly Polish ethnic lands within the German Empire and after 1918 German Republic. Casanova saw the region as essentially Polish whereas Bueno as German, but both Spanish correspondents saw the Greater Poland territorial dispute as a German political problem.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors want Upper Silesia to be part of the new Polish state or part of Germany? Did they believe the new Polish state was entitled to possess that territory?**

Different views on this question are seen across the examined press sources. Germanophile contributors were logically in favour of Germany controlling the disputed territory and criticized the Entente for acting based on its economic interests in the region. Both Sofía Casanova and Casimiro Granzów expected Poland to win the plebiscite. Granzów used historical arguments to support the Polishness of the region and expressed with more clarity than Casanova his desire of Poland controlling the disputed region. Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera did not express in his diplomatic reports a clear opinion on the control of the disputed region and didn't make any prediction about the plebiscite results either.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspapers' editors or press contributors want the Cieszyn Silesia region to be part of the new Polish state or part of Czechoslovakia?**

Casimiro Granzów and Tadeusz Peiper in their press articles used arguments in favour of Poland's control over the Cieszyn Silesia region whereas Revesz used arguments in favour of the Czech possession of the disputed region. It can be argued Agüera was also favourable to Polish control of the region due to its ethnographic reality, and, in addition, he was critical of Czech actions and the French policy on the conflict, which, in the Spanish diplomat's view, favoured Czechoslovakia over Poland.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors want Gdańsk to be part of the new Polish state, a free city or part of Germany?**

We can infer Casanova and Granzów were in favour of a Polish Danzig, or at least of a great deal of Polish control over the port city. Agüera was supportive of the covenant establishing the free city and the relations between it and Poland, and in addition, praised the work done by the British commissioner. Casanova, on the contrary, criticised Britain's policy in Danzig.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors expect the new Polish state to win the war against the Soviets?**

The views on the likelihood of Poland winning the war evolved throughout the conflict, and in summer 1920 most press editors and contributors in Spain were rather pessimistic about Poland's chances of victory. In his diplomatic reports for State Minister, Agüera reflected the optimism and pessimism in Poland regarding a Polish victory against the Bolsheviks, depending on the information he received from Poland's Foreign Affairs ministry and from the diplomatic corpus in Warsaw. When he was evacuated to Poznań he was rather pessimist about Poland's future. In addition, he was rather sceptic about a negotiated peace agreement to end the conflict.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors believe that Warmia and Masuria should belong to the new Polish state? Did they expect Germany or Poland to win the plebiscite?**

The Spaniards commenting on the question did not clearly state if Germany or Poland should own the region, but rather focused on who would win the plebiscite, and most agreed on a German victory because of the reality of the disputed region. Only 'El Liberal's Manuel Mateo indicated there were more Poles than Germans in the region, and this columnist clearly saw the disputed region as Polish. In addition, 'La Correspondencia de España' indirectly advocated the Polishness of the region by claiming that 1 million Poles lived in the disputed territory. On the opposite stand, there was Germanophile 'ABC', which criticised the fact the Entente initially regarded the disputed region as Polish, although later changed its stand and decided to organize a plebiscite.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors want Vilna to be part of the new Polish state or part of Lithuania?**

Agüera regarded Vilna and the surrounding area as Polish, and claimed that Poland was entitled to possess it, both from an ethnographic and from a historical and cultural point of view. Agüera and other Spain's State Ministry diplomats and officials were not so critical of Poland as many Spanish newspapers, not only the traditionally Germanophile ones, and not only the conservative ones, but also both liberal and pro-allied press publications were. These newspapers criticised the League of Nations contingent, Spain's participation in the contingent, Poland's imperialist attitude in the conflict with Lithuania over Vilna, and France's support of Poland.

**- Did Spanish diplomats, newspapers' editors or press contributors believe that Lwów and Eastern Galicia should belong to the new Polish state or to Ukraine?**

Clear opinions or statements on the entitlement of Ukraine or Poland to control the disputed region have not been found in the examined primary sources. However, 'ABC' criticised the Ukrainian demands in front of the Entente, and believed that, as a result of the conflict, Poland would end up controlling the whole Eastern Galicia. Most press comments criticised Austria-Hungary's (until its dissolution) and Germany's policies towards the Ukrainians until that moment, because these were conceived to generate a conflict and clashes between Poles and Ukrainians.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspaper editors or press contributors believe that the Jews should have autonomy within the new Polish state?**

'El Sol' was critical of the Polish Jews' wish to have autonomy within Poland. Sofía Casanova and Ramiro de Maeztu did not clearly express their views on the topic, and focused on explaining that Polish Jews wanted autonomy. However, because of the wording she used and her criticism of Jews' isolationism, we can infer that Casanova was against the Jews having political autonomy within the reborn Polish state.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspapers' editors or press contributors believe the Polish offensive in Ukraine was a good idea for Poland's chances of success?**

Sofía Casanova was critical of the Polish offensive in Ukraine whereas Gutiérrez de Agüera criticized the fact it led to a Polish evacuation of Ukraine, afterwards. Agüera also highlighted the internal political criticism of this military operation in Poland.

**-What Polish political, diplomatic and military actions and decisions were regarded in Spain as imperialist? By whom and why?**

The Germanophile conservative press in Spain saw certain Poland's policies, such as the Polish offensive in Ukraine during the Polish-Soviet War and Żeligowski's takeover of Vilna as imperialist. The latter was strongly criticised by liberal and pro-Entente newspapers as well.

**-What was the knowledge among Spanish press editors, contributors and diplomats on the ethnographic, social and historical reality of Poland's eastern borderlands, the so-called *Kresy*?**

Not only Sofía Casanova, but also Ramiro de Maeztu proved a quite accurate and profound understanding of the social and ethnographic reality of Poland's eastern borderlands. However, in his press comments, Granzów did not pay so much attention to the *kresy* as Casanova did. On the other hand, in his diplomatic reports, Gutiérrez de Agüera did not show such a deep knowledge on the ethnographic, cultural and historical realities of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth eastern borderlands.

**-Did Spanish diplomats, newspapers' editors or press contributors believe that the Treaty of Riga was a positive outcome of the Polish-Soviet War for Poland?**

Not enough primary sources have been found, particularly press sources, to give a proper full answer to the question. However, Agüera questioned the value of the treaty because he believed that the Bolsheviks could soon lose the power in Russia, what would remove any

value from the treaty, whereas Casanova did not see the treaty as an ultimate solution to the conflict.

## Limitations

One of the biggest limitations of this thesis has been that in regard to particular topics, mainly some of the territorial conflicts in which Poland was involved after gaining its independence, despite an abundant amount of sources, the diversity of the encountered diplomatic sources has been very low, because these were mostly diplomatic letters and telegrams from Spain's plenipotentiary minister in Warsaw Gutiérrez de Agüera to Spain's State Minister. Most often responses to these reports from the Ministry of State were only a confirmation of reception of the correspondence sent from Warsaw, and these confirmations of reception have not been mentioned in this work because they do not bring any value to the research purposes of the project.

Initially, a deep analysis of Spain's views on Polish internal political affairs and on the top Polish politicians of the examined period, as well as a description of the launch of diplomatic relations between Poland and Spain in 1919 was planned, but lack of time has forced me to resign from completing these parts of the dissertation.

An analysis in chapter 1 of Spanish views on the institutions created by the Central Powers in the new Kingdom of Poland created in occupied Russian Poland, meaning the Provisional State Council, the State Council and the Regency Council was started but has not been completed, also due to the tight deadline for submission of this dissertation.

A more comparative analysis of the simultaneous territorial and armed conflicts reborn Poland faced in the researched period could have been conducted, but lack of time was an obstacle to use this approach on chapters 3 and 4. Also, more attention or additional subchapters could have dedicated to the German, Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian minorities within the borders of the new Polish state by March 1921.

Catalan and Basque particular views on Polish affairs in the examined period could have been analysed in depth by means of a selection of relevant newspapers as primary sources, if more time had been available.

Not having been able to check German-language scientific literature, in particularly, but also Czech, Russian, Ukrainian or Lithuanian scientific literature regarding the conflicts between Poland and its neighbouring countries in the examined period, due to both the language barriers and a lack of time available, has been another limitation of the project.

A deeper analysis of the Spanish press views on the League of Nations involvements in all the conflicts that were related to the setting of Poland's borders could have been done.

Finally, it must be clarified that the different fragments of this dissertation have been written in different moments, mostly in the period 2018-2023, and each fragment had very different source amounts, qualities and types, all in all making that the writing styles and analysis approaches differ a bit across chapters and subchapters.

### Contribution to the field

The main contribution of this dissertation to the field of Modern History, and more specifically to the Modern History of East-Central Europe and the Modern History of International Relations, has been being a pioneering work that attempted to: firstly, present how in neutral Spain the Polish question and the stand of the Great Powers in war on this question were perceived; secondly, present Spain's reactions not only to the complex conflicts and wars the reborn Polish state had to face in the first years of its existence but also to the Great Powers' stands to those processes; thirdly, present the direct and indirect consequences of Polish affairs in Spanish politics and in Spain's State Ministry during the Great War, and more importantly during the period 1918-1921 (e.g. the question of the Vilna League of Nations contingent involving Spain and the enormous impact it had on the country's press); additionally, this work has even used contemporary academic work done in Spain on the East-Central European history of the examined period, as it has been done in the subchapter about the Polish-Czechoslovakian conflict over Cieszyn Silesia. Fourthly, this project has analysed Spanish views on Poland's affairs instead of Polish views on Spanish affairs, inverting the most common direction of research on the compared history or the history of the relations between these two countries in Spain's, and above all, Poland's academia. It can be stated this dissertation has, although not completely, partially filled an existing gap in the historiography of Poland's history from 1914 to 1921, namely, the Spanish views on Polish affairs at the time.

### Recommendations for further research on the topic

Further research on the topic could focus on Spanish views on Polish affairs during the period from March-April 1921 until March 1923 when Poland's eastern borders were



acknowledged by the Entente's Ambassadors Council. Moreover, it could focus on Spain's views on purely internal Polish affairs from November 1918 until March 1923.

Future research on the topic could also rely on scientific literature published in Germany, Czech Republic, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus and Russia in order to check against Polish scientific literature facts and interpretations regarding the territorial and armed conflicts that the new Polish state underwent. In addition, a future research project on this or a similar topic could rely a lot more on Spanish, French, British and North American scientific literature on East-Central European Modern History, with the goal of providing other additional perspectives to the critical analysis of the primary sources.

### Final statement

Working on this dissertation has been an exciting opportunity to connect Poland and Spain through historical research. It has also been a great opportunity to get to know the resources of Spain's National Historical Archive during the field research trips to Madrid. In addition, it has been exciting to spend so many hours reading articles and radiotelegraphic press notes on the Spanish newspapers of the researched period on Polish and international affairs. I expect this project to have a certain impact in historiography academia, both in Spain and in Poland and would like to get this work published in those countries at some point. Finally, I want to show his gratitude to everyone who has helped him in the conception and realization of the project.

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## Annexes

### Annex 1

Chapter 4, footnote: “Las Matanzas de judíos en Polonia. ¿”Qué es lo que ha ocurrido?, 'El Liberal', 9.12.1918, p. 3. Text by Abraham Shalom Yahuda:

“In the Spanish press lately have been published various notes that come from the Polish press agencies in Bern and Paris, in which there is more or less categorical denial of all the news that keep appearing about the killing of Jews in Russian Poland and Galicia, assuring that in all these cases it is about evil inventions, propagated by the German propaganda to discredit the Polish national movement. Seeing these denials, I am obliged to illustrate public opinion, especially to that part aligned with the cause of the Allies, and trusting in the justice ideas that 'El Liberal' advocates, I hope that it [the newspaper] it will take into account the following considerations following the example of various English and French newspapers which are aware of their holy mission.

First. It is not true that those news come from a German source, but quite the opposite, all the horrible details published not only in the Spanish press, but also in the English, French and Italian press titles, which do not belong to the reactionary parties, have their origin in terrifying clamours that come directly from the regions in which the most cruel killings have been committed and the most savage looting against the Jews, following the same methods of the pogroms as in the worst times of tsarist domination. I myself have recently received telegrams from the community of Amsterdam and one with horrific details from the "Bureau de Correspondance Juive" in The Hague, which cannot be suspected of hostility to the Poles, since throughout the war they supported in their correspondence Poland's desire for independence in the highest sense of justice, and therefore cannot be accused of complicity with German propaganda. Since among the French newspapers in La Victoire, from the 1st of this month, Gustav Hervé's organ [press title] - which is not suspected of making German propaganda or of being an enemy of the Poles - the one that publishes the details at greater length than in my view it is convenient to reproduce in summary these stories, published in the said French newspaper, and those referred to in the private telegrams mentioned above. From all this it results that the persecutions carried out against the Israelites in Galicia and Russian Poland by different plebeian elements with the participation of soldiers and legionaries, have taken the following proportions:

Massacres are reported in more than a hundred localities, especially in Brzezko, Kielce, Rubomir, Debica, Tarnow, Zator, etc. There are numerous dead and wounded everywhere. The Polish commando of Przemysl has fined the Israeli community of that city with three million crowns, threatening them to “order the soldiers to start the looting” if they do not pay the said amount. In Kielce, an assembly of Jews was attacked by machine guns. There are gruesome details: women raped and killed, children murdered.

In Lemberg the Polish troops, led by their officers, have seized the streets where the Jews live, and have systematically begun to murder and loot the shops and private houses, finishing off those who tried to resist. Many of these unfortunate people have been forced to get into their houses that were later set on fire, with very few being

able to save themselves by jumping out of the windows. Some hundreds who took refuge in a synagogue suffered the same fate, the arsonists not respecting even the holy place and causing the most horrible death to 600 men, women and children. Ten thousand Jews were left homeless, 80 percent of the Jewish population is reduced to misery. It is therefore understandable that the three million Jews of Galicia and Russian Poland, seeing their existence threatened, turn to their allies and to all the peoples of the world asking for their immediate intercession to end their martyrdoms: Therefore this precedent shows that these are authentic facts and not German inventions.

Second. From a telegram from Mr. Daszynski, a minister in the Warsaw government, addressed to Dr. Eihrenberg, chief rabbi of Stockholm, which was also published in the Spanish press and which should not have escaped the attention of Mr. Frankowski, it can be deduced that there have been massacres in Warsaw province. Except that the minister asserts that they were organized by the soldiers of the disbanded Austro-Hungarian armies and by political enemies of the Poles. But far from blaming those political enemies of the Polish people, he tries to mitigate their crimes by accusing the Jews by saying that "the pogroms" were directed against usurers, unfortunately affecting some innocent people. I do not want to stop here to refute accusations of this nature, which have been well known since ancient times and which also served as an excuse for the Black Bands in Russia, and for the Germans in their massacres of Jews and also for the Turks in their massacre of Armenians and Greeks. Just note that the minister does not deny everything and what a member of the government admits cannot be denied by Polish agencies, no matter how authoritative they are.

Third, the British government, in an unofficial note dated November 14, expressly warns the Poles that if the reports received about the "pogroms" in Warsaw are true, it would be forced to adopt a serious attitude towards such events, adding that these events are a promotion of the forces of disorder and violence that have been disturbing the life of the populations between the Rhine and the Volga for a long time. The victory of freedom achieved at this very moment would be of little value if the world saw the law of force, recently defeated, embodied in other forms no less repugnant to the principles of freedom. And then he says: "the Allies and the United States are ready to put all their resources into the work of restoring the economic bases necessary for civilized life in those regions, but only those that demonstrate with their actions that they want order and civilization".

Whoever knows the informal style of the Foreign Office will not hesitate for a single minute, since he would not assume such a serious responsibility on his own, and on his allies' account, without having collected well-founded reasons to believe in the aforementioned events, and the Poles cannot pretend that the Foreign Office has also received their reports from the German propaganda agencies. But what's more, in the statement that Mr. [Jan] Baranowski, representative of the Left of the Polish Republic, addressed to Balfour, Minister of Foreign Affairs in London, to calm the spirit of the English government, concerned about the killings of defenceless people, I know that it is about also to attribute all the information to German propaganda, but they do not go as far as the Polish press agencies, which deny all these facts and only try to minimize their importance, saying that "according to authorized sources" they are insignificant incidents between the starving people and the Jewish hoarders "the usual: "the Jewish hoarders!" which are nothing more than another version of the tale of the usurers. Mr. Baranowski is also right to judge these incidents as "insignificant", because, what does a few hundred men, women and children, and old people tortured, murdered, left alive, mean, next to the many thousands of Polish Jews heroically fallen on the battlefields for the freedom and independence of Poland? In addition, given that for Mr. Baranowski, an ideal as eminently patriotic as that of apologizing to "a hungry town", let us thank him for not

having chosen for the victims of the “hungry town”, an adjective more picturesque than that of hoarders. If it is true that there are usurers and hoarders, let them be brought to justice, but this should not be used as a pretext to hand over hundreds of towns to a mob of looters, rapists of women, and murderers of the elderly and children, and then search in hunger a mitigation for such monstrous crimes. What confidence can public opinion have in the unofficial or official affirmations of men addicted to such morality?

It is very easy to want to deny all or part of it, and it is even easier to insist on attributing everything to malicious inventions of enemies of Polish patriots. The fact that German propaganda has delightedly exploited the stories emanating from terror-stricken communities for its propaganda purposes should not serve the supporters of the Polish cause to invert the facts in the opposite direction from reality.

If there is anything German in all this, it is that the organizers of the killings and looting, as well as the inactive Polish authorities, have adopted the methods of the executioners of Belgium and Northern France, which consisted of placing the blame on the victims of the infamies that they committed”.