

PRZEGLĄD

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NARODOWOŚCIOWY

edited by
Łukasz Młyńczyk

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Special Issue:

JEWIS

**PRZEGLĄD NARODOWOŚCIOWY –
REVIEW OF NATIONALITIES**

Czasopismo naukowe poświęcone narodom,
mniejszościom narodowym i etnicznym

Scientific journal about nations,
national and ethnic minorities

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Hannah Arendt (1906-1975)

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Zielona Góra 2016

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Introduction

For a long time, the need to present in our periodical issues dedicated to the history, political problems and cultural legacy of Jewish nationality has been maturing in us. Hence the sixth, a special issue of “Przegląd Narodowościowy – Review of Nationalities” was simply titled “the Jews”. Despite the laconic form, the concept comprises all the knowledge resources of the probably most fully developed minority in the history of mankind. The term “Jews are a national minority *par excellence*” was an attempt to give it a unique place in the history of nations, but in parallel, these words are the remorse of all those who could not stop the enormity of the tragedy the Jews experienced by the absence of their country. The extraordinary nature of the issue of the periodical comes from the fact how the Jewish minority influenced the social, political and cultural life in countries where they had to create a diaspora. It will not be an exaggeration that it is Poland alongside with Israel which is the most important place in the history of Jewish life. We deliberately emphasize the concept of “life” so that beyond any doubts we can demonstrate that the responsibility for the tragic fate of the Jews should not be sought mainly in the history of Poland and Polish people. As stated by Professor Shevah Weiss in conversation, in the radio RMF FM: “For us Jews, Auschwitz is a land without God [...] it was here, it was on this earth, it was on the Polish soil – it should be near the Reichstag. There is something unfair in the fact that the stain is on the Polish territory – from this point of view, it is no longer the Polish soil, it is the land of the international Gehenna. On the Polish soil, but the organizers of these death factories, the industry of death were Germans”. So Poland was by almost one thousand years the place where the largest Jewish population lived, but someone else decided to deny this fact. Thus, giving a history of the Jews a distinct form is a minimum of what we can write about it.

Presented in this volume articles cover the entire spectrum of issues, including the ones referring to paradigmatic approach of such major phenomena as the Holocaust and anti-Semitism, Jewish history and forms of Jewish political organization, the

foreign policy of modern Israel, religious and philosophical aspects of Jewish life, and finally, content and inspiration of the fate of the Jews for literature and art, as well as Jewish poetry and prose. We hope that such a varied overview of the research that we present in this issue, both in terms of social sciences and humanities, will allow, however minimal, pointing to the complexity of the aspects of Jewish life, which can not be reduced only to the tragic days of the Holocaust and manifestations of anti-Semitism. The primary intention was to take account of a wide range of topics, which will not be limited solely to the study of the Jews as the representatives of a national minority in Poland. We realize that every judgment about Jews is entangled in their historical experiences. In our view, Jewish nationality, anywise we would like to understand this concept, should be presented in the form of a number of aspects of their multifaceted culture and complex biographies.

The sixth issue of “Przegląd Narodowościowy – Review of Nationalities” is released on the occasion of 110th anniversary of Hannah Arendt’s birth. The impact that this outstanding thinker and one of the most influential political theorists ever had on the political science literature would be difficult to estimate easily. The next generation uses her enormous output, of which consistent escape from the banality of interpretation was the basic feature. She forced readers to revise their established views, on the principle that not everything was finally explained. Her scientific analysis of totalitarianism and a famous essay on the Eichmann’s trial for decades shaped the style of thinking about social phenomena, which other people tried to see too one-dimensional, or give them uniqueness, without possibility of further inquiry. Arendt did not hesitate to ask the tough questions, which we believe is a spiritual testament and a commitment of contemporary researchers of political and social life.

At the same time the uniqueness of this issue of the magazine is also gaining its editorial dimension, because from now on all subsequent editions of the magazine will have appeared in English only.

Łukasz Młyńczyk