# Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland, 1914–1920

Widespread anti-Jewish pogroms accompanied rebirth of Polish statehood out of World War I and the Polish-Soviet war. William W. Hagen offers the pogroms' first scholarly account, revealing how they served as brutal stagings by ordinary people of scenarios dramatizing popular anti-Jewish fears and resentments. While scholarship on modern antisemitism has stressed its ideological inspiration ("print-antisemitism"), this study shows that anti-Jewish violence by perpetrators among civilians and soldiers expressed magic-infused anxieties and longings for redemption from present threats and suffering ("folk-antisemitism"). Illustrated with contemporary photographs and constructed from extensive newly discovered archival sources from three continents, this is an innovative interpretation of central and eastern European history. Using extensive first-person testimonies, this work reveals gaps – but also correspondences – between popular attitudes and those of the political elites. The pogroms raged against the conscious will of new Poland's governors, while Christians high and low sometimes sought, even successfully, to block them.

William W. Hagen is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of California, Davis. He has published extensively, including *German History in Modern Times* (2012), which was selected as an "outstanding academic work" by the American Library Association's journal, *Choice*.

Frontispiece I. The Old Synagogue in Przemyśl (Yiddish: Pshemishl), an important Galician city on the Polish-Ukrainian ethnographic boundary, as photographed in 1905. Market sellers and buyers mingle with passers-by. The synagogue, dating to the late sixteenth century, possessed a fortress-like quality often found in the premodern Polish Commonwealth's eastern borderlands, where interconfessional wars and Cossack rebellions raged sporadically. In 1746, Jesuit academy students plundered it, destroying Torah scrolls and other sacred furnishings. Such riots, inspired or tolerated by the Catholic Church, scarred the Commonwealth's final centuries. In November 1918, anti-Jewish violence of a different character exploded.
*Source:* Imagno. Getty Images, 53312817.

Frontispiece II. Rzeszów (Yiddish: Raysha), a provincial city in West Galicia. This undated early twentieth-century photograph displays the Renaissance-era town hall and central square. Among the public are Austro-Hungarian military officers, traditionally clad Jews, and civilians in proletarian and bourgeois attire – or, as was often said of acculturated Jews, in "European dress." Here, in May 1919, a pogrom wave in Rzeszów's rural hinterland engulfed the city.
*Source:* Imagno. Getty Images, 92327429.

# Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland, 1914–1920

William W. Hagen
*University of California, Davis*

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521884921
DOI: 10.1017/9781139025737



First published 2018

Printed in the United States of America by Sheridan Books, Inc.

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*
Names: Hagen, William W., 1942– author.
Title: Anti-Jewish violence in Poland, 1914–1920 / William Hagen.
Description: New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, [2018] |
Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2017045847 | ISBN 9780521884921
Subjects: LCSH: Antisemitism – Poland – History – 20th century. |
Jews – Poland – History – 20th century. | Poland – Ethnic relations. |
Pogroms – Poland – History – 20th century.
Classification: LCC DS146.P6 H34 2018 | DDC 305.892/4043809041–dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/20170458471

ISBN 978-0-521-88492-1 Hardback
ISBN 978-0-521-73818-7 Paperback

And there are secret motives of conduct. A man's most open actions have a secret side to them.

That is interesting and so unfathomable!

Razumov, in Joseph Conrad's *Under Western Eyes* (Toronto, 2010, pp. 120–21)

Pogroms surprised not only Jews, but also Poles.

They tried therefore to make excuses not only to the world, but to themselves.

Galician-born journalist Benjamin Segal, in *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*, no. 25 (June 20, 1919)

True, they were robbed, and they live in fear of total extermination (*zupełnej zagłady*), but this inspired in them great national feeling.

Polish army intelligence report on Volhynian Poles facing Bolshevik domination, 1919

We didn't have any books at home. Not even children's books or fairy tales. The only "fantastic" stories came from religion class. And I took them all very literally, that God sees everything, and so I felt I was always being watched. Or that dead people were in heaven right over our village. I looked for the faces of the deceased neighbors in the clouds, and I found them, too. I was worried about them when the wind picked up or when it rained or there was thunder and lightning. Then I asked myself whether "the good Lord" was punishing them, because they had to race through the sky together with the clouds.

Novelist/Nobelist Herta Műller (b. 1953), on childhood in a German-speaking Romanian village, in *New York Times*, July 17, 2016

The terror of the unforeseen is what the science of history hides, turning a disaster into an epic.

Philip Roth, *The Plot Against America* (New York, 2004), 114.

For not forever will the poor man be forgotten, the hope of the lowly not lost forever.

Arise, O Lord, let not man flaunt his strength, let nations be judged in Your presence.

O Lord, put fear upon them, let the nations know they are mortal!

*Book of Psalms*, 9:19–21, translation Robert Alter (New York, 2007)

It would mean that the descendants of poor Poles would have to pay the descendants of those who were rich.

Jarosław Kaczyński, chairman of Poland's Law and Justice Party, rejecting Jewish Holocaust victims' compensation claims for dispossessed property; available at www.facebook.com/tv1polska/videos/1089260141153880/ (August 14, 2016)

# Contents

# Figures

# Maps

# Preface

This book's theater spans the multinational lands of historical Poland, much more far-flung than today's ethnographically homogeneous, post-Communist nation-state. They were Judaism's greatest exilic stronghold. The drama is that of the Polish-Jewish relationship in World War I and its tumultuous and bloody aftermath, culminating in the Polish-Soviet War of 1920, little remembered in the West but crucial for East Europe's future. At center stage are Christian Poles' actions toward the multitudinous Jews in their midst, whose voices respond in something like a Greek tragedy's chorus.

This is a book about Judeophobic deeds and their justification in words; about anti-Jewish riots and pogroms, both soldierly and civilian; and about antisemitic ideology and politics. But it is also especially about popular or grassroots ethnic violence, perpetrated independently of state authority far more often than not and mostly in defiance of it (but frequently supposing covert government approval). In this it dovetails with present-day scholarly debates on pogroms in the Russian Empire and, more broadly, on popular violence as social phenomenon and practice. It aims to contribute by emphasizing the *expressive* character of popular ethnic violence – its *enactment* of social-cultural *scripts*. Its arguments in explanation of these dark dramas, as they occurred among Christian Poles and their Jewish neighbors in the years 1914–20, will emerge in the pages that follow, but here it should be said that much of the perpetrators' violent behavior was unreflective and conventionalized, ingrained and unquestioned (though their *intent* to inflict damage is another matter).

There are valuable studies of ethnic violence as a tool of political conflict and implementation of ideological programs, most of them probing how it – as successful, premeditated action by political entrepreneurs – advanced aggressors' interests and damaged victims' possessions, bodies, and lives. Such works steer clear of interpreting ethnic violence as behavior expressive of unreflected-on, if not altogether unconscious, social and cultural beliefs, fears, and wishes. This is what these pages, in their farthest reach, undertake. If it were true that human action is *both*

conscious, purposive, and in some sense rational *and also* unself-critical, culturally embedded, and often irrational, then these two approaches to understanding ethnic violence might be complementary. But this study, while assuming the sufficiently challenging task of puzzling out the messages in the mayhem's medium, will also show that ethnic violence generally damaged the "rational interests" – slippery concept – both of perpetrators and of state and society.

This is a study resting on years-long, wide-ranging research into previously unconsulted or neglected unpublished sources reposing in archives in Warsaw, Kraków, Vienna, Jerusalem, and New York. Its chapters assemble archival mosaic stones into pictures of ethnonational relations of Poles and Jews in their several respective subcultures and the violence accompanying them during six years of war and revolution. While this book supplies – in passing rather than all at once – political and social context essential to following its arguments, it should not be taken for a sustained and authoritative narrative history of politics (whether among Christians or Jews), nor of war, state, society, or even of anti-Jewish violence itself, whose full extent requires further exploration. It illuminates in passing many issues controversial among historians, leaving it to them and their readers to ponder further implications (although prospectors for triumphalist nationalism will pocket no new nuggets). It will be seen that suffering and injustice spared almost no one, though in radically varying degrees.

This book's aim is to analyze social and cultural *meanings* of ethnonational conflict and violence as *embodied* and *expressed* in participants' acts, as articulated in their *words*, and as I, their interpreter, have *inferred* them. The method results in myriad vignettes that are suggestive of many lines of analysis. Historical understanding is author's offering but also reader's response to newly excavated evidence and fresh argumentation. These pages display a gallery of hundreds of historically forgotten individuals, of whom only glimpses are seen, but from which comprehension of the culturally disparate worlds they inhabited will flow as by osmosis. Their words are these pages' most eloquent. As for scenes of cruel violence the reader will occasionally encounter, they serve as evidence for arguments this book proposes. The psyche can be morbidly or obsessively drawn to them; whole societies can be gripped with traumas of remembrance or reenactment. Of this I am well aware, so painful scenes are not lingered over.[1]

[1] Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996); Eva Hoffman, *After Such Knowledge: Memory, History, and the Legacy of the Holocaust* (London: Public Affairs Press, 2005).

These pages' rich micro-level documentation reveals something of deep importance that pales or is lost in macro-level generalizations: in violence among people, innumerable decisions are made, both for good and ill. To recognize that individual actions diminish as well as intensify strife is, if not to demonstrate the operation of ethically guided free will, to dispel the oppressive sense left in great or cruel violence's aftermath that it was but the predetermined consequence of one or another fatal human propensity. Microactions make a difference, whether they embody individual freedom or not.

As for this book's ethical standpoint, it does not depend on assumptions about universal morality but accepts that codes of values are historically evolved and inflected in varying ways. History's actors are not ourselves. We do not legislate for the past. The quest here is for insight into conscious and unconscious motives and meanings. Moral judgment and censure are subjective prerogatives, or they repose in power's hands – though the authorities (including the democratic collectivity), themselves entangled in moral ambiguities, often fail to act.

The published sources and scholarly monograph literature touching on this book's themes are mountainous and unscalable to their peak by even the most persistent and polyglot historian. The notes in the chapters, apart from identifying archival documents and other unpublished sources, confine themselves mainly to citations of scholarly works indispensable to the discussion at hand.

Some documentation in these pages will be found controversial, especially by readers accustomed to the view, justifiable in itself, that Poland's rebirth in an age of cataclysmic war and revolution was a glorious affirmation of the nation's will to live freely. But, as these pages demonstrate, and as all serious scholars of the subject know, it was, except for the privileged and well-cushioned few, an agonized, hunger-wracked, crime-ridden, fear-beset, and often bloody resurrection. Yet Poland's Jews, through their competing political leaders, invested high hopes in Poland's emergence as a democratic republic and widely, if also apprehensively, welcomed it. There was little Jewish nostalgia for Russian rule, and Habsburg Austria and Imperial Germany, though far friendlier to their Jewish subjects than the fallen tsardom, had vanished irretrievably.

A book such as this must take a stand on violence in general. Undeniably, it stalks the shadows of human life. Without it, history is imaginable only as utopia. Though it derives physiologically from *Homo sapiens*' brute origins, human violence broke free during the long process of civilization from the blind imperatives of survival and reproduction. Like the axe, it became a tool, both in individual and communal hands.

Application of its sharp edge ceased to be instinctual and became instead a matter of choice in the pursuit of conscious ends. These might be one or another form of collective or individual self-aggrandizement, as in the seizure of material goods, but violence came just as well to serve religious and moral purposes, particularly in warding off threats, imagined or real, to social and cultural existence.

Human violence also explodes unpremeditatedly or, at any rate, without prior calculations of advantage or necessity. Such volcanic events reveal the delicacy of the webs of cohesion humanity has spun for itself, and the force of repressed resentment and desire. Yet it is a rare outburst of spontaneous violence whose perpetrator is not prepared to defend it as right and just, however self-servingly. To recognize that the enabling condition of human violence is its subjectively felt *righteousness* gets to the heart of the matter. It is tempting to think that if violence were impossible to justify, it would wither like an unused bodily organ or pass into the realm of the pathologic, where certain rare behaviors still dwell.

Understanding of human violence thus derives from its positive, value-laden *meaning* in its practitioners' eyes. To those who believe that people's actions are rationally directed toward maximizing power and wealth, an emphasis on social or cultural rationales for violence may seem like exchanging substance for shadows. Yet political government and economic power manifest themselves in myriad forms, all of them historically evolved and invariably clothed in ideological and cultural dress. Like violence, wealth and political rule seldom, if ever, figure as ends in themselves, but rather their pursuit is meant to realize cultural *values*. These find expression in languages of individual or social morality descending from larger conceptions of cosmic order and human perfection or redemption.

Ethnic and cultural antagonisms are *lived* more consequentially than they are *thought*, but they must be harbored – even if unconsciously – in mind and heart to be acted on. Rarely are antagonists evenly balanced. Aggression will flow more forcefully from one side than from the other (or others). It is easier to reconstruct hostile *ideas* and suppose that minds thinking them will eventually translate them into *deeds* than to understand how people turn to violence against imagined outsiders among whom they have peacefully lived, no matter with what prejudices and resentments. One of this book's challenges is to transcend opposition of idea and action by showing how action *embodies* ideas. This will have the good effect of demonstrating, through looking at action, just *which ideas* are being enacted (for mind and heart harbor many contradictions).

One consequence of stressing *practice* over disembodied *ideas* or *ideological doctrines* is to highlight the *situationality* of such *identities* as *Pole* or *Jew* (or *Christian* or *peasant*). Recent debates among historians and social scientists on "national indifference" emphasize that ethnonational identity has often been, and today often still remains, a passive, ambivalently experienced, or even irrelevant aspect of ordinary people's quotidian lives, leaving many in doubt and disarray at moments of political crisis in which national loyalties are summoned. The pages that follow will illustrate identity's kaleidoscopic dynamics, usefully eroding the common tendency to concretize and absolutize – reify or ontologize – ethnonational and religious categories. In their light, readers will soon find that all collective judgments on the groups involved – "Poles," "Jews," and others – are false. At most, tendencies or potentialities, not necessarily expressive of majorities, come to light. Nations and peoples are abstractions, not, except in simplest demographic or citizenly sense, flesh and blood. They cannot be "naturalized," however much it continually happens in everyday discourse (and even though newly admitted American citizens are, revealingly, said to be naturalized). Few, if any, want only to be what others think them to be.[2]

Some readers may question the veracity of one or another account of violence registered in these pages. Especially in East European historiography, scarred by past ideological distortions from both left and right, factual accuracy is often fetishized, not infrequently to dismiss unwelcome argumentation. What might be called the "forensic approach" often prevails, seeking to establish individual or group agency so as to assign historical *responsibility* or *guilt*. The professional historian is sworn to empirical truth. Yet facts, once established, require interpretation, which when strong can and must bridge gaps or blind spots in the documentary record until new evidence, if discovered, requires reconceptualization.[3]

[2] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity,'" *Theory and Society*, vol. 29 (2000), 1–47; Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Rogers Brubaker et al., *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008); Tara Zahra, "Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis," *Slavic Review*, vol. 69, no. 1 (2010), 93–119; for nuancing of the indifference argument, emphasizing socially differentiated, politically generated, and culturally distinctive meanings of national identity within historically evolved linguistic communities, see Jakub Beneš, *Workers and Nationalism: Czech and German Social Democracy in Habsburg Austria, 1890–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 10ff, 243ff. On emergence through violence of national identity within highly diverse communities, see Max Bergholz, *Violence as a Generative Force: Identity, Nationalism, and Memory in a Balkan Community* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016).

[3] On these and related points, see William W. Hagen, "A 'Potent, Devilish Mixture' of Motives: Explanatory Strategy and Assignment of Meaning in Jan Gross's *Neighbors*," *Slavic Review*, vol. 61, no. 3 (2002), 466–75.

Doubtless exaggeration occurred, and panicked misreportage, of the mayhem and injury these pages analyze. I have sought out multiple accounts so as to minimize bias. The gravest violence is well documented, but I have not disqualified plausible eyewitness testimony by lone individuals. In the end, the wide extent and destructiveness – physically, materially, and psychologically – of anti-Jewish violence in these war-torn years is as irrefutable as daily nightfall. The first challenge is to accurately reconstruct it, recognizing that very many localities escaped it and that popular participation was limited. It was almost always a minority affair, usually dependent on the presence of armed men. Greater still is the challenge to understand its social and cultural meaning, contemporary signification, and legacy to the present day – for expressive violence still inflames the horizon and perhaps always will.

Most things having to do with Central and Eastern Europe are, viewed through Western eyes, complex, unfamiliar, even exotic. As we encounter the Polish lands, home of Europe's largest Jewish population, they lay divided, bereft of once-savored sovereignty, under the rule of Austro-Hungarian, Russian, and Imperial German monarchies. Readers must accustom themselves to thinking of historic Poland and its inhabitants engulfed by the light and shadows of these mighty states. As in the course of World War I they broke free of them, Poles' and Jews' relationships to each other (and also among themselves) faced a new dawn, hopeful but also ominous amid political cataclysms and renewed warfare, culminating in 1920's Polish-Soviet War.

The Introduction following this Preface is unusual in largely foregoing a critique of previous historical scholarship, offering instead a portrait gallery of leading-role actors in this book's dramas, some individual, some collective, including scholarly writers who have influentially interpreted the Polish-Jewish relationship. It is these mentalities, existential perspectives, and world views that must be understood if interpretation and explanation are to move toward objectivity's sunlight. A minichapter follows, entitled, "Theoretical Footnote: Ethnic Violence in Social Science and Historiography," in which this book's relation to powerful analytical traditions is briefly identified and defended. Readers allergic to such scholarly pollen – enticing to many worker bees! – may choose to fly over it.

The succeeding chapters will move to and fro between cultural-psychological and social-political levels. The mythic meanings and messages projected on the first of these two planes – notably the scenarios pogroms enact – are released by upheavals on the second plane: economic and political crises, foreign or civil war. The historical setting of

expressive violence must be known. It often denies itself, pretending to be mere self-defense or unapologetic rapacity when it is, in cultural-psychological reality, much more.

The stage shifts from Austrian Poland (Galicia) during and immediately after World War I to wartime Russian Poland and eastward regions. The Galician account, assembled from rich but largely neglected Austrian civil and military archives, dramatizes at ground-floor level the Habsburg monarchy's slow-motion buckling. It reveals the eruption, from small tremors, of pogrom violence that reached volcanic intensity at war's end, transforming in 1919 into rural social war targeting Jews foremost but with new Poland's officials and gentry also under fire.

After the independent state's chaotic birth in November 1918, anti-Jewish violence's terrain moved toward the 1920 war's battlegrounds in eastern ethnographic Poland and the nationally mixed Lithuanian, Belarusian, and Ukrainian borderlands beyond. Perpetrators of ethnic violence among Poles were mostly, during the world war, unarmed civilians and off-duty soldiers; in the war's immediate aftermath, they were irregular armed bands of demobilized imperial soldiers, deserters, desperados, and criminals trailed by motley civilian mobs; these pogromists were slowly superseded by soldiers in newly arisen government armed forces, whose anti-Jewish deeds likewise attracted civilians; finally, during the Polish-Soviet War, chief aggressors were Polish army soldiers and Russian-oriented irregulars allied with Poland against the Red Army.

This study's new light on wartime *Russian Poland* radiates from largely unmined German and Polish Zionist records and those too of the philanthropic American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. The final chapters, focused on 1919–20 soldierly violence in eastern Poland and beyond, rest on Jewish-assembled eyewitness reports and long-inaccessible and never before deployed documentation lying, stamped "secret" in Polish army intelligence archives.

Multiple types of anti-Jewish violence stalk these pages, enacted according to varying scripts. Unsurprisingly, the trend, mainly because of perpetrators' advancing militarization, was toward more extreme and comprehensive violence. But soldiers were simultaneously, by socialization, civilians. They brought with them to army life their preexisting social and cultural imaginations. The war's sufferings, and the Bolshevik revolution, found reflection in shifting scenarios of violence, even while old and deep-rooted fantasies continued to cause retributive dramas to be staged, cudgels to be gripped and fists to ball.

The aim is not to construct would-be authoritative macro-political narratives, whether triumphalist or debunking, but rather to summon up, in first-person testimony, the dilemmas and delusions driving

perpetrators' hostile or violent actions, the reactions of those under attack, and how aggression was, in participants' and contemporary observers' minds, interpreted. Anti-Jewish violence commonly assumed symbolical, collectively enacted, theatricalized form. Few of the many worthy scholarly studies cited in pages below sought to solve the riddles such behavior posed, and none that contemplate this book's historical subject matter. The tradition of emphasizing ethnic violence's political and sociological dimensions has dominated interpretation to the neglect of deep-rooted cultural expressiveness.

In the end, readers will have confronted, in its many masks, the cruel face of collectively staged rituals of plunder, humiliation, imagined revenge, and murder. But it will also be seen that when society and civilization, at the grassroots level, totter on destruction's brink, individuals commonly attempt to prevent, limit, or halt its plunge. History, in these pages, is a never decisively settled duel of life and death, both in the streets and in the human head and heart.

I have engaged with this book's themes for many years. Colleagues who have aided my quest for evidence and insight are too numerous to name. I thank Cambridge University Press's anonymous referees, who helped pull the first draft down to earth. Among other things, these pages reap the harvest of long engagement in the interdisciplinary, graduate-level Center for History, Society, and Culture at the University of California, Davis. Perhaps surprisingly, the greatest challenge has been to peer through Poles' eyes, for their multifarious world views and historical vantage points differ in important ways from those farther west. Among many others, let me recall five departed scholarly eminences whose company taught me a great deal about Poland – Jerzy Topolski, of Poznań, and Stefan Kieniewicz, Antoni Mączak, Jacek Kochanowicz, and Jerzy Tomaszewski, of Warsaw. Among active historians of Poland, Alina Cała has been an insightful guide to Polish Jewish history. Jerzy Jedlicki and his seminar colleagues opened their forum to me. In the pages that follow, which address painful issues in Polish history, these scholars' spirit is present, counseling resolution of controversy through empirical objectivity, recognizing that Poland, like all countries, has suffered painful traumas that still hurt today; that facts must be interpreted, not left in futile hope that they will speak for themselves (or justify that which they depict); and that contextualization, nuance, and historicization of regrettable events are essential tools of understanding.

Poland's history, in its brilliance as in its tragedies, is one of Europe's greatest, and so too is that of Poland's Jews. I have explored Jewish history in English, German, and Polish, but not Yiddish and Hebrew. Fortunately, much work of crucial importance by writers in these two

languages originally appeared in Polish, German, or English or has been translated. In this book's primary-source documentation, Jewish voices speaking in the latter three idioms have been most consequential. They gave expression also to the Yiddish-speaking multitudes on whose behalf they often spoke.

Numerous archivists aided my researches in Israel, as in Poland, Austria, and New York. Lewis Bateman, seasoned editor, supported this book from its beginning. His successor, Michael Watson, supplied sagacious counsel. It is mysterious how one synthesizes far-ranging research and experience into a book, but many other people's lives are positively and happily intertwined with it, including especially my wife Ursula's.

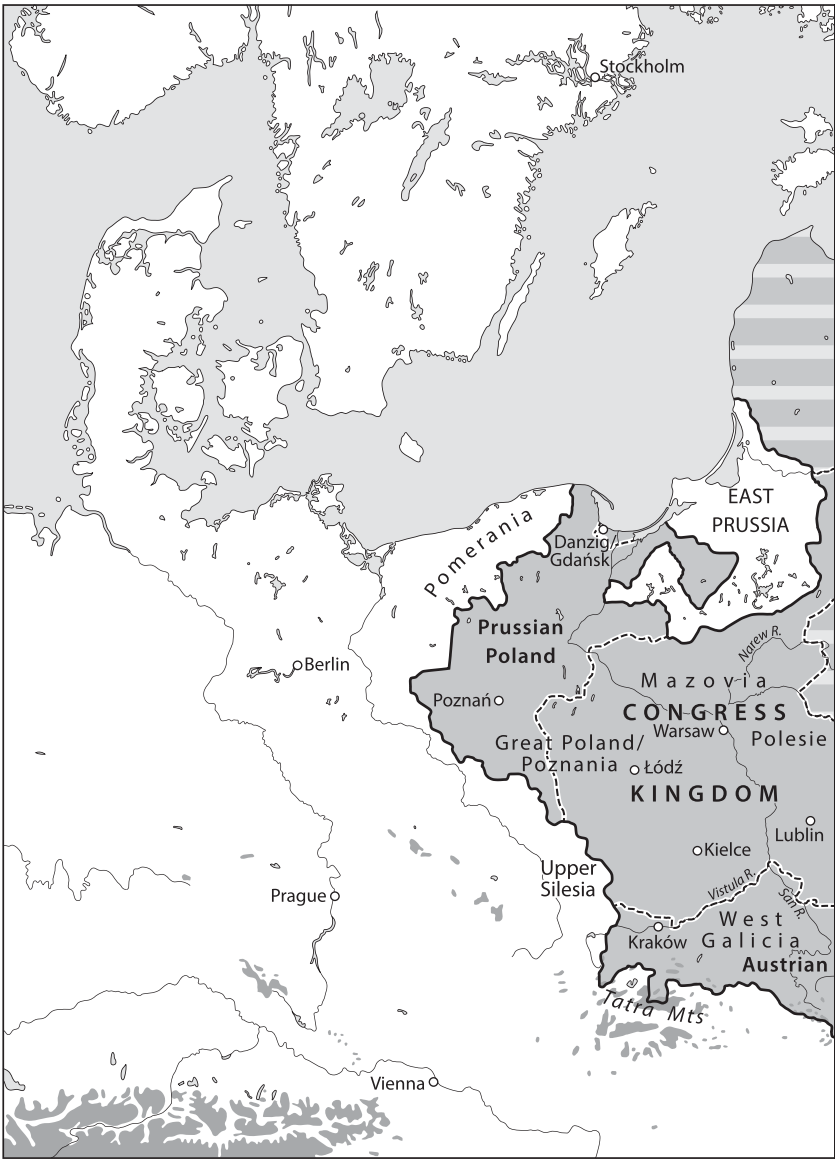
# Note on the Cover Image

This 1920 poster cries out for aid to Polish soldiery in stemming the incoming flood of inhuman, nightmarish invaders who brandish a Soviet red star–bearing flag. A powerful image of the war's apocalyptic dimension, it will have connected with specters of demons stalking the dark side of traditional popular culture. This was a creation of eminent and prolific graphic artist Edmund Bartłomiejczyk (1885–1950). (*Source:* Muzeum Wojska Polskiego w Warszawie.)

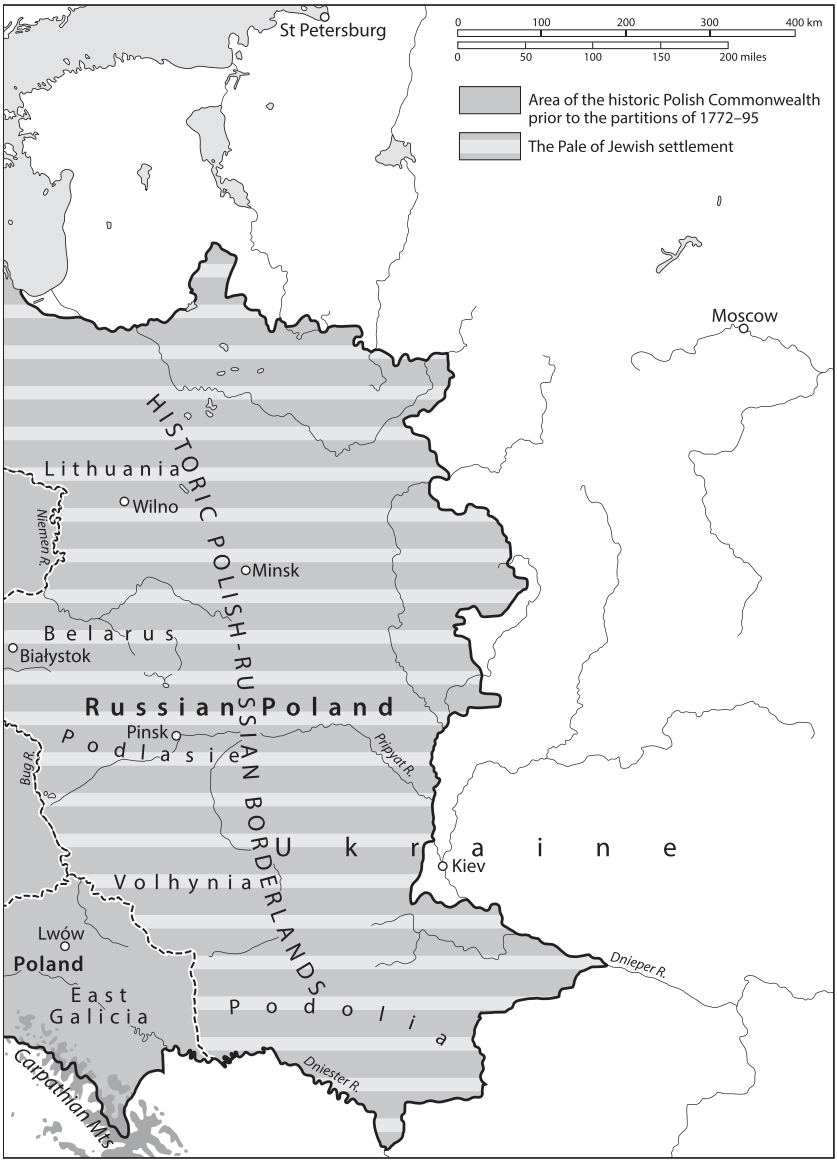
# Guide to Polish Pronunciation

Accents normally fall on the second-to-last syllable.

| | |
|---|---|
| Vowels: | *a, e, i, o, u* uniform, as in "s*a*w," "m*e*t," "*i*t," "sh*o*w," "sh*oo*t" (*ó* = *u*). |
| Vowels: | *ą, ę* lightly nasalized; *ą* as in softly and rapidly pronounced English "*o*wn" or French *on; ę* as in softly pronounced English "*en*ter" or French "m*ain*." |
| Diphthongs: | *au, eu* as in "*ou*t" and "b*oy*," respectively. |
| Hard consonants: | (1) *b*at, *d*og, *f*ox, *g*et, *k*it, *l*et, *m*et, *net, p*et, *r* (lightly rolled), *s*it, *t*ot, *z*ero.<br>(2) *c*, at word's end or when followed by any letter except *i* or *z* (on which, see below): "*ts*" as in "ca*ts*." |
| Soft consonants: | *h* or *ch* (identical sounds) as in "*h*at"; or aspirated, as in Scottish "*loch*" (*e.g.*, "bread" (*chleb*) = *h*leb).<br>*j* like English *y*, as in "*y*et."<br>*w* like English *v*, as in "*v*at"; at word's end, as *f* in "sta*ff*." |
| Other letters/sounds: | *ł* ("dark l"), like English *w*.<br>*rz, ż* (identical sound), like *s* in English "plea*s*ure."<br>*ź* soft form of *rz, ż*.<br>*cz* as in "chat."<br>*sz* as in "shot."<br>*szcz* continuous double consonant, as in "ca*sh ch*ange."<br>*ś* (or *si*) soft English *sh*, as in "*sh*e."<br>*ć* (or *ci*) soft English *ch*, as in "tea*ch*."<br>*ść* continuous double consonant, as in soft "fre*sh ch*eese."<br>*ń* before consonants or at word's end, slightly nasalized, as in "o*ni*on"; before vowels, spelled as *ni* and pronounced like "*ny*et." |

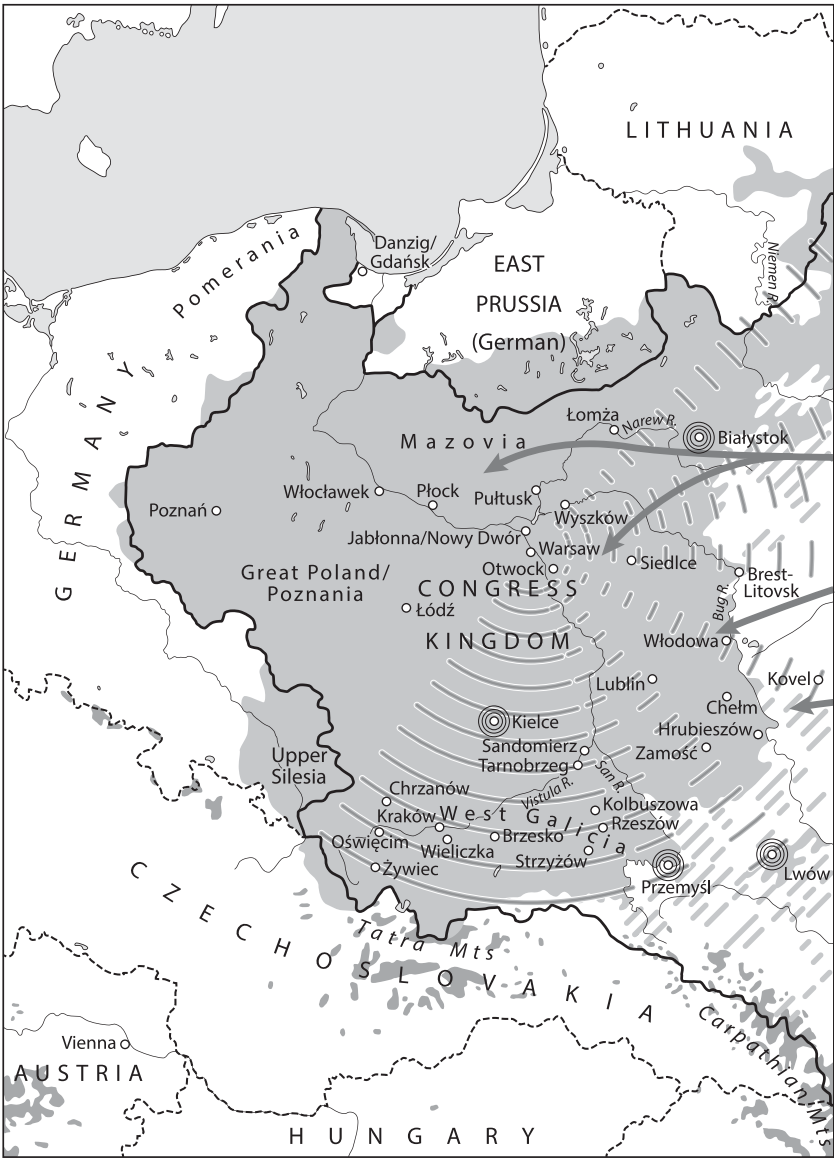



Map I Lands historically stamped by Polish rule and culture before the partitions (1772–95) of the centuries-old Polish Commonwealth – an elective monarchy, governed by a numerous democracy of nobles led by regionally entrenched magnate aristocrats. It was one of Europe's largest states. Stretching from near Berlin to St. Petersburg and Kiev, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, perched on the Danube basin's northern mountain frontiers, its Catholic aristocratic-republican political culture contrasted sharply with the life-worlds of Orthodox Russia, Protestant Germany, and the Muslim-ruled Turkish Ottoman Empire. On a line running roughly north and east of Białystok (northeast of Warsaw) to Przemyśl (west of Lwów), the population was mostly non-Polish-speaking and largely non-Catholic. Yet everywhere within the Commonwealth the political power holders were nearly all Polish Catholic landed nobility, many of them scions of earlier polonized and catholicized local lineages. Despite the

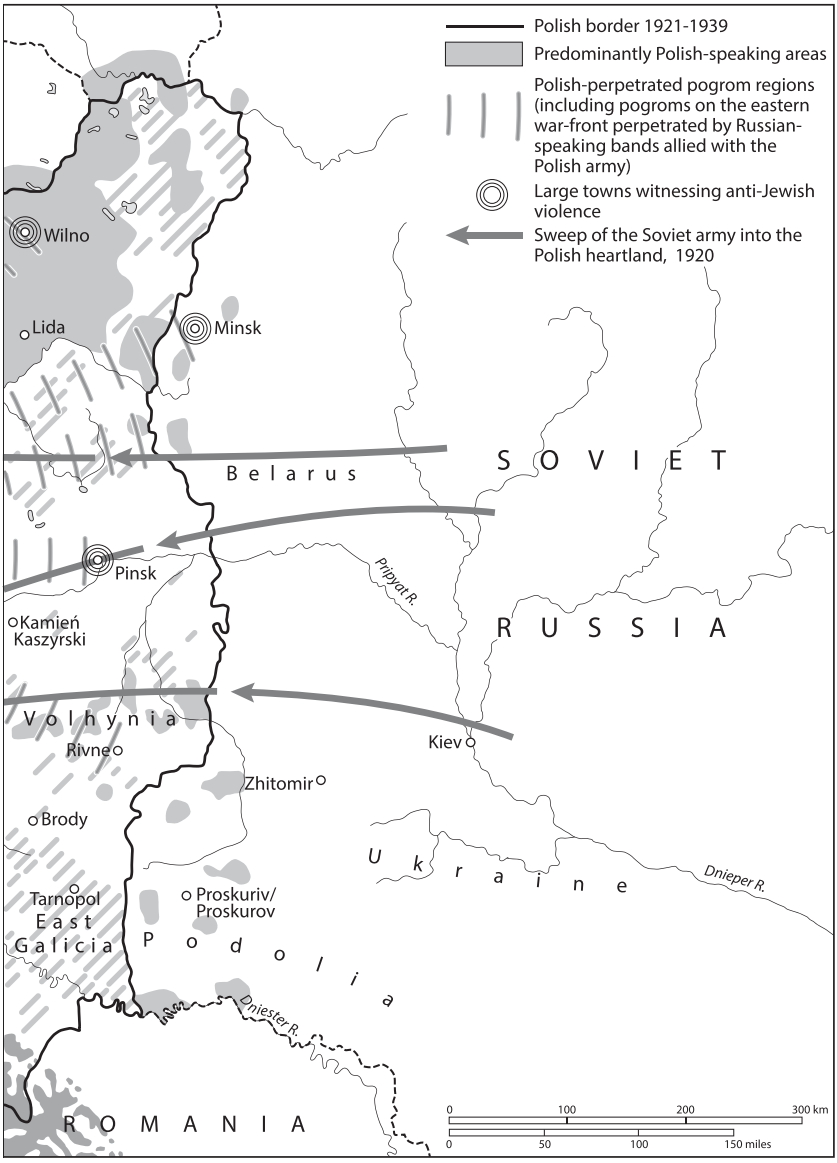



Caption for Map I (cont.)

partitions, local Polish landowners and clergy and intelligentsia springing from their ranks retained great regional influence and even, as officeholders in the partitioning powers' administrative hierarchy, governing authority. The Commonwealth's Jewish community, the world's largest, approximated a half-million in a prepartition population of some twelve million. Polish Jews were accustomed to life in a polyglot and religiously variegated world overarched by a Polish aristocratic culture that, in ethnographic Poland's eastern borderlands, only the wars and revolutions of the twentieth century finally extinguished.




Map II The pogroms of 1918–20. Polish-perpetrated pogroms erupted first in November 1918 in West Galicia and in East Galicia's Lwów, with notable outliers in Przemyśl and Kielce. Thereafter, anti-Jewish violence accompanied the war fronts established by Polish military conquest eastward, toward Wilno, Pinsk, and Kiev, and in 1920 by the Polish-Soviet War, whose culminating battles blazed on ethnographic Polish soil. Along the Polish-Belarusian settlement frontier, the largely non-Polish Bałachowicz army perpetrated much anti-Jewish violence, some




Caption for Map II (cont.)

of whose sites are included here. But the widespread pogroms in Ukraine and elsewhere in the historic Polish-Russian borderlands, instigated by Ukrainian, Russian, and other non-Polish hands, are left unidentified.