

The Image of Polish Jewry in the Interwar Period

	Existential Problem	Proposed Solution
General Zionists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Antisemitism – economic boycott; attacks on and murder of Jews in Lvov (pogrom, 1918) 2. Quotas on Jewish enrollment in high schools 3. antisemitic speeches by members of the National-Democratic Party (the Endecja) 4. Influence of Austrian and German antisemitism on Polish antisemitism 5. Restriction of Jewish influence in local elections by redrawing boundaries of cities and towns 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Settlement of Palestine by farmers, artisans, and blue collar workers 2. A Jewish majority in Palestine 3. Aspiration to unite all groups and classes behind Zionist goals 4. The World Zionist Organizaization -- broadly democratic, seeks to supervise all operations
Revisionist Zionists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Antisemitism is a constant; it has ebbed but is about to re-erupt. 2. The Polish Jewish masses – equanimity, resignation, despair 3. Jews are likened to a group of people seated in a cart without reins careening toward a chasm. 4. The situation of European Jews – “a catastrophe of historic magnitude” 5. We are a minority everywhere; antisemitism = xenophobia. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jewish majority in Palestine – the minimum aspiration, not the maximum 2. Another million Jews would create a Jewish majority in Palestine. 3. Three to four million Jews in Eastern Europe are knocking on the gate – entry visas

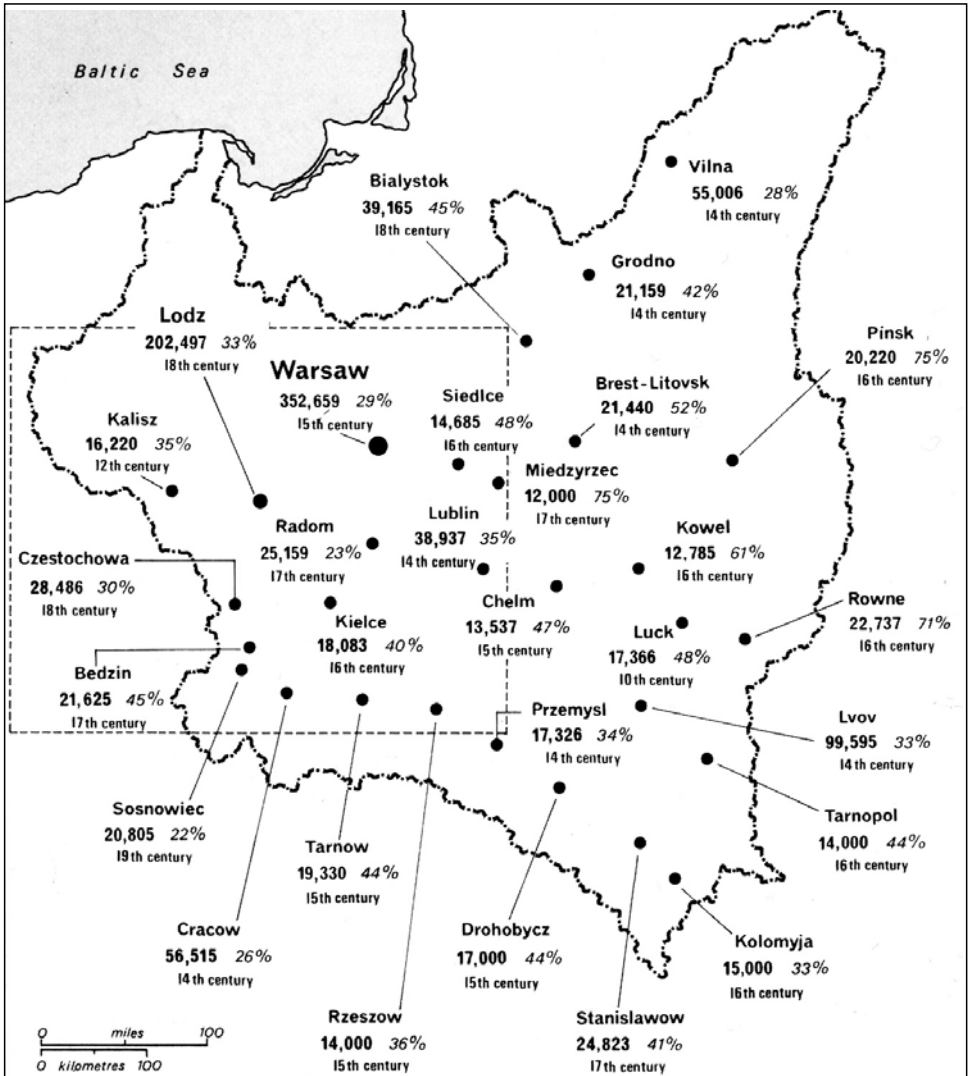
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Poalei Zion – Hitahdut	<p>Two types of national recognition:</p> <p>a. “Bourgeois” nationalism observes the contrast between itself and other nations. Militant nationalism (Revisionism).</p> <p>b. Socialist nationalism – separatism – stronger emphasis on the negative aspects of other strata in Polish Jewry (the Bund)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our nationalism – aspiration to build the country on foundations that correspond to our national sensitivities, efforts to become an integral part of the Socialist movement 2. Struggle for unrestricted, unlimited aliya 3. Aspiration to create a Jewish socialist proletarian society in Palestine, entrenched in all sectors of agriculture and industry
Mizrachi	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hatred of the “eternal people” is eternal hatred.” 2. Why do they hate us? Because we are different from all other nations and tongues. 3. We are weaker than any other nation and tongue; we are foreigners in every nation and tongue; we lack the territorial base that other nations have. 4. Agudath Israel opposes Zionism – The Council of Torah Sages ruled that it is not yet time to advocate settlement of Eretz Israel. 5. Agudath Israel condemns the Zionists’ efforts in Eretz Israel but lauds the Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The nations will eventually recognize the Jews as a living nation and grant them national rights. 2. Mizrachi construes Jewish Palestine as being Jewish in religion and language. 3. Mizrachi’s role is to raise its banner, the national-religious banner. 4. To encourage as many national-religious Jews as possible to make aliya

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<p>The Haredim ("Ultraorthodox") -- Agudath Israel</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our people, our Torah, and our religion are in a sorrowful, miserable state. 2. The study halls and yeshivot have emptied, the Torah is cast aside, and our sons and daughters have abandoned us. 3. The flames of heresy and desecration have made inroads among our people. The Zionists' goal is to secularize Jewish community life and to resemble all other nations. 4. The founder of Jewish nationalism opposed Orthodoxy all his life. Nationalism has become a substitute for Torah. 5. Nationalism: a new deity, tantamount to idolatry 6. The national-religious renounce one of the basic tenets of the Jewish faith. Nationalism = idolatry. The national-religious are collaborators in idolatry 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The only reliable remedy: unity and organization. 2. The formation of Agudath Shelomey Emuney Yisrael (Agudath Israel) to supervise all matters of religion and faith and observance of the holy Torah. 3. Settlement of Eretz Israel is a commandment that stands alone. We have neither perished nor expired without Eretz Israel. 4. Without the Torah, Israel cannot survive for even one century . 5. Our overriding concern must be Jews, followed by Eretz Israel. 6. Settlement of Eretz Israel is a commandment, but settling groups of provocative apostates is the exact opposite: a massive transgression. It is the way not to build Eretz Israel but to destroy it.

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The Bund	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Antisemitism and attacks on Jews in various Polish towns (March 9, 1936) 2. Boycotting of Jewish workers -- policy of starving the Jewish masses 3. Attempt to create a Jewish ghetto in the universities 4. Polish nationalists declare that Poland is simply a way station for Jews. 5. A national home in Palestine would not eradicate the Diaspora; to state otherwise is to repudiate the Diaspora and its spiritual value. 6. Perhaps one-tenth of world Jewry can settle in Palestine . 7. The Diaspora will continue to exist; only faith in a better future for the Jewish masses in the Diaspora would die! 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our homeland is Poland; we are not foreigners here. 2. Our fatherland is the land where we live. 3. The Jews regard themselves as citizens with equal rights. 4. Each nation's proletariat should have its own organization. 5. Poles and Jews have a common destiny. 6. The Bund continues to urge Jews to consider themselves Polish citizens entitled to equal rights . 7. The possibility of building a new socialist society 8. We shall fight fascism together with the Poles; we shall spare no sacrifice on behalf of this country. 9. Cultural autonomy in Poland -- a Yiddish-language school system

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Assimilationists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Antisemitism exists everywhere . 2. The Zionist solution is good only for a few hundred thousand Jews. Even a liberal regime would not accept the state-within-a-state solution (the Bund program). 3. The Jewish masses will continue living here in Poland, but in what way? 4. Recent incidents perpetrated by gangs of youths – humiliating riots 5. The Jewish problem is a blatant example of how the law of resemblance works: the need to resemble the other, countered by factors that prevent this. The process ends with assimilation. 6. Zionism aims to achieve a Jewish national renaissance are the result of every individual's congenital wish to assimilate to his or her surroundings. 7. There are two problems with Socialism (the Bund): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. It has no justification in the social structure of Polish Jewry. b. It is by definition a cosmopolitan movement. The Jewish Socialists Must emphasize their Jewish distinctiveness. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anyone with a cultural affinity for contemporary Europe is already standing on assimilationist soil. 2. The lhud prescribes assimilation of the masses as the only solution. 3. The circle of non-Jewish sympathizers is growing steadily. 4. SAMA – its board includes Polish Catholics and members Of Polish academic youth organizations . 5. Recent incidents have confirmed our argument. Should the entire society be blamed? Many have protested! 6. We should build a bridge by which adherents of different religions dwelling in the same country can achieve a rapprochement. 7. Assimilation is the solution to the Jewish problem according to the Western European model . 8. All segments of Polish Jewry are essentially assimilationist; we are merely the noblest manifestation of assimilation's many facets.

Chart taken from:
The Image of Polish Jewry Between Two World Wars
 by Ephraim Kaye



Polish cities with 12,000 or more Jewish inhabitants in 1931.
 Map credit: © Martin Gilbert 1982.