

THE ASSOCIATION OF PROGRESSIVE JEWS IN KRAKÓW AND ITS SYNAGOGUE IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE 19TH CENTURY

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Abstract: This article presents the history and religious views of the Kraków's Association of Progressive Jews in the last quarter of the 19th century, a favorable period in the history of this group. The article discusses certain aspects of the history of this milieu (legal status, authorities, finances, growth), social work it undertook, and the religious life of the Tempel synagogue. Special emphasis was put on the sources of religious standpoint of progressives, on the scope of the religious life, and the preachers' activities (Moritz Duschak and Samuel Landau at that time). The article contributes to the research on Progressive Judaism in Polish lands and to the religious history of Galician and Krakovian Jewry.

The aim of this article is to describe the history and religious life of the progressive milieu in Kraków in the last quarter of the 19th century. The milieu of progressive Jews existed in Kraków since the 1840s until the outbreak of the Second World War. Kraków's progressives, like progressive Jews in other cities in Polish lands (e.g., Lvov, Warsaw),¹ organized as an association, and prayed in their own synagogue (Tempel), which was built in 1861. Previous research on Kraków's progressive milieu concentrated on the decade from 1864 until 1874² and later on the activities of Ozjasz Thon, who was appointed a preacher in Kraków Tempel in 1897.³ The period of the last two decades of the 19th century has never been the object of deeper scholarly interest; perhaps this is the reason why in the literature it has been called a "period of stagnation."⁴ It appears, however, that the opposite is true. Not only were the years 1874-1897 a time of significant growth for the group of progressives, which almost tripled during this time, but they were also a period of stabilization of synagogue life. Moreover, the late 1870s and 1880s saw a vivid development of social initiatives of progressives – many new charitable associations were founded or launched in these decades, and Kraków progressives became active members of other, non-Kraków-based institutions such as the *Israelitische Allianz zu Wien* and *Agudas Achim* in Lvov.⁵

¹ On the development of the so-called progressive Judaism in Polish lands, cf. Corrsin 2000; Galas 2011.

² The most comprehensive research on this period was conducted by Hanna Kozińska-Witt, cf. Kozińska-Witt 1999a; 1999b; 2000; 2011. See also Mahler 1934.

³ The literature on Thon is relatively rich; the newest studies on him cf. Galas, Ronen 2015.

⁴ Galas 2011, p. 10.

⁵ On the influences of Agudas Achim on Kraków progressive circles, cf. Maślak-Maciejewska 2014.

The Progressive Association in 1874-1897⁶

During most of the period under discussion, the Progressive Association was governed according to its 1864 statute. According to this document the Association had two major aims: to maintain its own prayer house, in which services would be held in accordance with “the requirements of civilization,” and to support needy members of the Association, especially students.⁷ The next statute, adopted in 1895, reformulated those objectives and declared that the Association had three main aims: fulfilling the religious needs of its members and maintaining the prayer house, supporting youth with a special emphasis on its religious instructions, and exerting influence on the development of communal institutions in the “progressive spirit.”⁸

According to the statute from 1864, which in this matter repeated the provisions of the first statute from 1843, the Association was governed by a body comprised of nine members: three chairmen who held the office interchangeably, three inspectors, cashier, controller and secretary.⁹ From the late 1870s, the office of association chair was held by Józef Oettinger, Chaskel Eibenschutz and Leopold Reich; in the 1890s by J. Oettinger, Jan Albert Propper and Leon Horowitz. A new statute from 1895 differed significantly in this matter from the previous two documents. The board was increased to 15 members and divided into three sections: “for religious and charitable aims,” “for administrative and financial purposes” and educational.¹⁰ The number of chairmen was reduced to one and L. Horowitz was elected to this office in 1898.

The main sources of income of the Progressive Association at that time were fees for seats in the synagogue (approx. half of its income) and membership dues. Less important, although still significant, were one-time subventions, legacies, incomes for selling aliyot, and donations for rituals such as weddings and funerals. The main expenses of the Association were the salaries of its functionaries, maintaining the synagogue building and supporting the needy, as well as charitable and educational institutions.¹¹

The Progressive Association developed steadily in the last quarter of the 19th century; in 1871 it had 130 members,¹² and in 1885 it numbered 218 members.¹³ This number further increased in the next decade, and at the end of the century membership totaled

⁶ In this article I am using the umbrella name *Association of Progressive Jews* (or just *Progressive Association* or *the Association*) because it has a tradition in the literature on the subject – this English translation was used in cf. Kozłowska-Witt 2011. Actual name of this institution changed many times during the times of its existence, which can be observed in the titles of the official documents it published, cf. Sprawozdanie 1872; Sprawozdanie 1899; Sprawozdanie 1900; Statut 1857; Statut 1866; Statut 1895. Whenever I use the term “progressives” in this article, I am referring to the members of this association.

⁷ Cf. Statut 1866.

⁸ Cf. Statut 1895.

⁹ Cf. Statut 1857.

¹⁰ Cf. Statut 1895.

¹¹ Unfortunately the yearly financial reports of the Association for the entire period do not exist; therefore the presented analysis was based on the only-existing budget statements from 1870-71 and later from 1898-1900. Although sources are not sufficient to draw solid conclusions about the changes in budget, certain features might be pointed out, such as a significant decrease in the percentage of expenses spent on salaries (71% in 1871 and 43% in 1898), or general improvement in the financial standing of the Association.

¹² Cf. Sprawozdanie 1872.

¹³ ANK, Akta Magistratu, sig. 7014.

376.¹⁴ According to the Association's statutes from 1864 and 1895 members were entitled to an additional seat in the synagogue for their spouse. Analysis of membership lists shows that in the discussed period the practice indeed existed that only a head of the family (or a widow) joined the Association, allowing their closest family to benefit from membership. Therefore we can ascertain that the number of people actually belonging to this group (participating in the religious life of the synagogue and agreeing with the ideals it promoted) was significantly higher than the number of members listed in the official register. Considering that, at this time, the average Jewish family had 5 members,¹⁵ it may be assumed that the progressive milieu could have constituted a substantial part of the Jewish population in Kraków at the time – even 7-8% (a maximum estimate). The growth of the Association is reflected well in the architecture of the Tempel synagogue; the building, erected in 1861, was significantly extended in the years 1893-94.¹⁶

Progressives were also an influential group due to their economical and professional standing. In 1885 almost one third (29%) of the members of the Association were part of the professional intelligentsia (including clerks, lawyers and doctors); 25% were proprietors and another 24% were merchants. Entrepreneurs were also a significant group (9%). Almost absent were craftsmen.¹⁷ Many of the progressives maintained professional bonds with Christian citizens of Kraków and were active outside of the Jewish quarter, Kazimierz. It should be mentioned that the Progressive Association itself facilitated its members' participation in their professional lives by stipulating that, in the case of students, doctors and public officials, the obligation to participate regularly in religious services should be enforced leniently.¹⁸

The position of progressives within the Jewish community was gradually gaining strength during the 19th century, which is reflected, among other factors, in their growing presence in the communal authorities. In 1883 an orthodox rabbi of the community, Simon Sofer, a son of the Hatam Sofer and an ardent opponent of progressives, died.¹⁹ In the same year, progressives succeeded in the communal elections and their representatives – J. Oettinger, Józef Rosenblatt and J.A. Propper, among others – entered the board of the Jewish community and dominated it.²⁰ The position of the Progressive Association was strengthened further in 1887 when the progressive preacher (Moritz Duschak at that time) was granted a permission to perform wedding ceremonies without the approval of the rabbinate – a privilege for which the Progressive Association had solicited since 1868.²¹

¹⁴ Cf. Sprawozdanie 1900.

¹⁵ Cf. Zyblikiewicz 2013, p. 296.

¹⁶ ANK, ABM, ul. Miodowa 24 f. 68; ANK, BM 46, Dz. VIII, 1, p. 112A. On the architecture of the synagogue and the extensions of the building, cf. Zbroja 2005.

¹⁷ My calculations according to ANK, Akta Magistratu, sig. 7014.

¹⁸ Cf. Statut 1866: § 29.

¹⁹ On Sofer's hostile attitude towards progressives cf. Manekin 2011, p. 175.

²⁰ *Izraelita* 1883, no. 41; *Ojczyzna* 1883, no. 21. I am grateful to Prof. R. Manekin for sharing with me her private copy of *Ojczyzna*.

²¹ Cf. Maślak-Maciejewska 2013, pp. 59-61.

Social and Charitable Work

Since its foundation, one of the main aims of the Progressive Association was supporting and assisting the needy. This objective was carried out through the Association's "support fund," but the scope of aid provided this way was limited due to financial reasons. The Progressive Association and its members created, participated in and financed numerous other charitable institutions serving various segments of Jewish society – children, youth, widows and the elderly. The main aim of these initiatives was not only to improve the material situation of various social groups but also to instill in them social and civic awareness, a pro-Polish attitude and to encourage them toward intellectual development. Engagement in charitable and social work became one of the pillars of the ideology promoted by the progressive milieu and was presented as a moral responsibility of its members.

The last quarter of the 19th century saw a great flourishing of the social initiatives of progressive circles. In these decades progressives set up far more charitable associations than in previous decades, and some of them proved to be durable, existing up until the outbreak of the Second World War. Particular attention was paid by progressives to children and youth. Impoverished schoolchildren were supported extensively by the Association of Support of Poor Disciples of Mosaic Faith (*Stowarzyszenie Wsparcia Biednych Uczniów Wyznania Mojżeszowego*), founded in 1877. Every year it provided hundreds of children with textbooks, shoes and clothes, and sometimes also assisted them financially.²² In 1887 the Association extended its activities and launched a new initiative – a free dining hall for boys and girls who were attending school in the Kazimierz quarter. Although the institution was founded, financed and managed by Jews, it was open for Christian children as well.²³ In 1890 the Association for Curative Summer Camps for Jewish Children (*Towarzystwo Lecznicznych Kolonii Wakacyjnych dla Izraelickiej Działwy Szkolnej*) was launched, and by 1939 sent out more than 10,000 underprivileged children, often those diagnosed with tuberculosis, for a summer stay in the Rabka resort.²⁴ Progressives also continued their support for another initiative, the Aid Association for Poor Jewish Boys (*Stowarzyszenie Wsparcia Biednych Chłopców Starozakonnych*), founded in 1866.²⁵ In the 1880s progressives constituted two thirds of the association board, and their support for the institution was steady and significant in the last quarter of the 19th century.²⁶ Although at that time children remained the main focus of progressives, they also organized and supported associations for adults. Among the most active of such associations launched and active in this period are: the Women's Association for Supporting Jewish Widows (1874), the Association for Support of the Jewish Elderly (1873) and literacy courses for Jewish adults (1897). Progressives also opened and supported institutions that had educational and scientific aims, such as Sfas

²² Cf. Statut [1876]; Sprawozdanie 1878; Sprawozdanie 1880; Sprawozdanie 1883; Sprawozdanie 1886.

²³ Cf. *Ojczyzna* 1887, no. 16; 1888, no. 21.

²⁴ My calculation according to *Towarzystwo* 1929; Sprawozdanie 1939.

²⁵ More on this initiative in the period before the last quarter of the 19th century, cf. Kozińska-Witt 1999a, pp. 157-159. On Dankowicz's extensive involvement in the work of this association, cf. Maślak-Maciejewska 2013, pp. 66-67.

²⁶ Cf. Sprawozdanie 1893; Sprawozdanie 1896.

Emes (1893), which aimed at promoting Hebrew language and Hebrew literature, or the Ezra library (1899). The support of progressives for the above-mentioned institutions was multidimensional: they entered their boards, became their members, supported them financially, promoted them and organized meetings or celebrations connected to their activities in the Tempel building.

Religious Life

Kraków progressives did not frequently discuss their religious stance or their expectations regarding liturgy and synagogue services. Rare statements on this topic, however, reveal that progressives perceived themselves simultaneously as traditional and sensitive to the aesthetic needs of modern times. In 1883 one of the leaders of this milieu, Jonathan Warschauer, characterized the difference between the orthodox and progressives by saying that the latter did not have any religious dogmas that differed from the orthodox, but they prayed in the “European way,” paying attention to order during the service and to a dignified atmosphere.²⁷

In the last quarter of the 19th century, similarly to the previous decades, the service in the Kraków Tempel was organized according to the Vienna Rite. A special emphasis was put on the decorum and elegance of the service, and a choir was introduced.²⁸ Hebrew liturgy was retained with only a few elements in other languages: a prayer for the emperor, which was said in German, and Polish patriotic prayers and songs – such as *Boże coś Jude*, popular in Kraków since 1882 – which were recited at the end of the service. Similar to Vienna and many other synagogues in the Habsburg Empire, a modern sermon was also introduced in Kraków. First it was delivered in German, in 1868-1875 in Polish, and after 1877 again in German. Only in the last decade of the 19th century was a Polish sermon reintroduced. Differently than in Vienna, from the very beginning the Kraków Tempel had a small organ (harmonium),²⁹ not used, however, during Shabbat. It should be assumed that introduction of harmonium to the Kraków progressive synagogue was due to influences coming from Prague. The introduction of organs to the Old Schul in 1837, used mainly for weddings and liturgy outside of Shabbat, was the most important modification of Vienna Rite made in Prague, which had otherwise adopted the Viennese model.³⁰ The existence of this inspiration on Kraków was confirmed in 1885 by the progressives themselves who, in a letter sent to the Vice-Regency in Lviv, referred to the similarities between the Kraków Tempel and the Old synagogue in Prague.³¹ They acknowledged that religious services in these synagogues were held in the same way, “according to the modern forms.” They also added that the association that administered

²⁷ Cf. *Nowa Reforma* 1883, no. 47.

²⁸ In the interwar period the choir was already mixed; this change might have been introduced earlier. Unfortunately no sources were found which could confirm when this transition took place.

²⁹ *Die Neuzeit* 1861, no. 14.

³⁰ Meyer 1995, p. 153; Fruhauf 2009, pp. 24, 78. About discussion on organs in Vienna, cf. Fruhauf 2009, pp. 38-39.

³¹ They referred to the present “Spanish Synagogue.” The building of the „Old synagogue” was razed in 1867 and a year later at its site the new synagogue was built, only later called the “Spanish Synagogue.”

the Old Synagogue (Association for the Improvement of Jewish Worship) had the same goals as the Kraków Progressive Association.³²

The progressive milieu in Warsaw had also an impact on Kraków progressive circles. It appears that the pro-Polish attitude of Kraków progressives might have been reinforced by impulses hailing from the Polish Kingdom. Festive Polish patriotic services, organized regularly in the Kraków Tempel in the last quarter of the 19th century, were organized for the first time in October 1861 on the same day as the Polish-Jewish patriotic manifestations in Warsaw. They were organized for the second time in 1869, the central part of which was a Polish sermon delivered by Szymon Dankowicz (1834-1910) – a preacher who came to Kraków from Warsaw, where he was active in progressive circles and presumably was a pupil of Marcus Jastrow, a rabbi famous for his patriotic activity.³³ Having a command of the Polish language, Dankowicz was able to preach and teach in this language, which became greatly important in the Polonizing progressive circles of Kraków. In the discussed period Kraków progressives regularly read *Izraelita* – the most important Warsaw periodical edited in Polish by progressive Jews. Kraków's progressives not only sent their correspondences and private announcements to this journal, but also, in 1889, announced on its pages the opening of the preacher position in Kraków's Tempel.³⁴

Last three decades of the 19th century saw a stabilization of synagogue life in Kraków's Tempel. In 1867 the Progressive Association appointed Józef Fischer as cantor of the synagogue. Fischer kept this position for almost half a century, until his death in 1914.³⁵ Thus his appointment ended a period in the history of this milieu, when it did not have a permanent cantor. Fischer was a very charismatic figure and soon became one of the leaders of the progressive milieu. Besides his work in Tempel he was also the owner of a flourishing publishing house, which printed statutes and reports of the Progressive Association and of other various charitable associations it supported. His publishing house also printed works of progressive leaders (including Izaak Cyłkow, a preacher in Warsaw) and renowned Jewish writers, such as Hayim Nahman Bialik. As a cantor in Tempel, in addition to leading prayers, Fischer was also the choir conductor and its mentor. Supposedly due to his ardent Polish patriotism and his fluency in the Polish language, the tradition of organizing pro-Polish patriotic manifestations in the Tempel synagogue prevailed even in periods when there was no Polish-speaking preacher. Moreover, it was only in the last quarter of the 19th century that organizing Polish patriotic manifestations became a regular custom in Tempel, which lasted until the outbreak of the Second World War. Progressives celebrated occasions such as the anniversaries of the adoption of the Constitution of May 3rd, the anniversary of the Battle of Vienna and various anniversaries and celebrations commemorating Polish writers, especially Adam Mickiewicz.³⁶ Involvement in organizing such ceremonies did not contradict with celebrations honoring the Habsburgs, which were organized simultaneously.

³² ANK, Akta Magistratu, sig. 7014.

³³ More on Dankowicz's activities in Warsaw cf. Maślak-Maciejewska 2013, pp. 24-50. More on Jastrow, cf. Galas 2013.

³⁴ *Izraelita* 1889, no. 14.

³⁵ *Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny* 1914, no. 72; *Nowości Ilustrowane* 1914, no. 14; Bałaban 1936, p. 512. I am grateful to Mr. E. Duda for sharing the information about the latter source with me.

³⁶ More on these celebrations cf. Maślak-Maciejewska 2012.

The stabilization in synagogue life was reflected, however, primarily in the fact that, for the majority of the period under discussion, Tempel had a permanent preacher. Expectations regarding his service included not only delivering regular sermons and fulfilling the religious needs of progressives (such as assisting wedding ceremonies), but also teaching religion in Kraków's secondary schools, which became a customary duty of progressive preachers since the late 1860s.

Preachers – Moritz Duschak and Samuel Landau

When Dankowicz left Kraków in 1875, presumably due to his unstable position and conflicts pertaining to his salary, the progressive synagogue was left without a preacher. It took the progressives two years to find a proper candidate for this position.

In 1877 the position was granted to Moritz Duschak (1815-1890).³⁷ Duschak was born in Moravia; in his youth he studied with rabbi Joachim Pollak and after that moved to Bratislava [Pressburg] to study in the orthodox yeshiva of the Hatam Sofer. Although he probably was expelled from the yeshiva because of his growing interest in secular knowledge, he appreciated and referred to the formation he received there until the end of his life. In 1839, after successfully passing the gymnasial exams, he entered the Philosophical Faculty of the Prague University where, in 1842, he received his PhD.³⁸ Before coming to Kraków, Duschak served as a rabbi in several communities: Habern, Aussee and Gaya, where he spent more than two decades (1855-1877). During his stay in Gaya, Duschak published many halachic and historical works and became known as a prominent Talmudic scholar. His religious stance at that time was conservative and might be called "modernized traditionalism" and "anti-Reform". In the 1840s Duschak spoke openly against the proposals of the conferences of reformed rabbis – he disagreed with the proposal to modify the circumcision ritual, spoke openly against abandoning observance of the second day of festivals and disagreed vigorously with Samuel Holdheim's proposal to move Shabbat from Saturday to Sunday.³⁹ His views on the reform of Judaism were similar to those of Zacharias Frankel. Duschak, along with rabbis such as Michael Sachs, Shlomo Jehuda Rapaport and Heinrich Graetz, supported Frankel's idea to organize the "Conference of Theologians" (Theologen-Versammlung), which was supposed to bring together rabbis and scholars who had conservative views but strived for progress based on the historical nature of Judaism.⁴⁰

In the 1870s the Kraków progressive milieu was already Polonized and the newly hired preacher was expected to preach and teach religion in this language. While granted a post, Duschak was obliged to learn Polish within three years of his nomination. Sources confirm that he undertook this task, but never achieved a language fluency that would allow him to freely express himself.⁴¹ Although he tried to teach religion in Polish

³⁷ Cf. BHR I; Heller 1930.

³⁸ AUK Katalog; BHR I.

³⁹ Cf. Duschak 1846.

⁴⁰ Cf. Frankel 1846a; 1846b.

⁴¹ *Czas* 1878, no. 79; 1878, no. 108.

(he was a teacher of Mosaic religion in gymnasia),⁴² presumably for the whole period of his tenure in Tempel, the weekly sermons were delivered in German – Duschak's first language, and in which he published. The only exceptions were Polish patriotic manifestations during which Duschak would say a prayer in Polish and give a short speech in the language. By doing this Duschak fulfilled the expectations of his position but, unlike his predecessor Dankowicz, he did not engage in any other Polish patriotic activities. He did, however, express his loyalty to the Habsburg monarchy many times by dedicating his work to the monarchy and the emperor and praising them. The only preserved sermon from this period is one consecrated to the emperor.⁴³

Although Duschak was a former student of the Hatam Sofer, an ultra-orthodox leader, his arrival to Kraków did not result in any significant betterment of progressive-orthodox relations in this city. He was never welcomed by the leader of Kraków orthodoxy and son of the Hatam Sofer, Shimon Sofer. However, owing to his halachic knowledge and status as a Talmudic authority, Duschak gained some recognition in the orthodox circles of Kraków's Jewry. He even became a teacher of orthodox children and youth who would visit him at home to study together.⁴⁴

During his tenure, Duschak engaged in expanding in Kraków the activity of the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien, an institution initiated by Viennese preacher Adolf Jellinek, whose aim was to advocate emancipation, modernization and cultural standing of Jews via extensive educational work.⁴⁵ In March 1881 a branch of the Allianz, presided by Duschak, opened in Kraków and attracted many leaders of the Progressive Association, among others J. Warschauer, J. Oettinger and J. Rosenblatt.⁴⁶ Duschak hoped that the support of this organization would facilitate the establishment of a religious school for Jewish youth, an idea he promoted since the 1860s and which was never fulfilled. Thanks to Allianz support, another institution did, however, open in Kraków – the School for Training Jewish Craftsmen, for orphaned boys. The school offered instruction in carpentry, ironwork and carving, combined with fostering Polish patriotism. Its opening in 1889 became a great success of Kraków's progressives.⁴⁷ At that time Duschak was no longer present in Kraków – already in 1888 he left for Vienna, where he died two years later on July 21, 1890.⁴⁸

The moment Duschak resigned from his position, the Progressive Association started a search for his successor – a candidate fluent in Polish, having philosophical training and a graduate of a rabbinical seminary. Despite serious difficulties in finding a proper candidate (no one answered the first job announcement), the Progressive Association managed to hire a preacher by 1890. The person hired was Samuel Landau, whose biography is difficult to reconstruct due to some contradictions in the sources. Landau was born in 1854, presumably in Będzin. In the 1880s he studied in Berlin's Hildesheimer's

⁴² Landau 1937, p. 7.

⁴³ Duschak 1878; 1883; 1888.

⁴⁴ Bader 1953, p. 199.

⁴⁵ More on this institution, cf. Siegel 2010.

⁴⁶ Jahresbericht 1882.

⁴⁷ *Ojczyzna* 1887, no. 4; 1888, no. 11, p. 19; 1889, no. 13. The building of the school was financed by Arnold Rapaport, a member of the Progressive Association.

⁴⁸ He was buried at Zentralfriedhof; his gravestone is well-preserved.

Rabbinerseminars.⁴⁹ Simultaneously he commenced philosophical studies at Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, which he continued at the University in Halle, where in 1888 he received his doctorate.⁵⁰ Some sources suggest that after receiving his title he moved to Hannover to take a rabbinic position there. Even if he did, already in 1889 he participated in the competition for the preacher post in Kraków. Sources are inconclusive as to whether he had a command of the Polish language at that time or if he had committed to learn it within a reasonable period of time.⁵¹ It should be assumed that he had a basic knowledge of the language and mastered it quickly. Already in December 1891 he was able to deliver sermons in Polish.⁵² Unfortunately none of them were published and no detailed records pertaining to their content exist.

During his stay in Kraków, Landau, similarly to his predecessors Dankowicz and Duschak, engaged extensively in social and charitable activities. He became a board member of the Aid Association for Poor Jewish Boys, and of the Ezra Library.⁵³ In 1894 he assumed the role of president of the Sfas Emes association and as such vigorously engaged in the cultural and educational activities of this institution.⁵⁴

One of Landau's initiatives was founding a private religious school for boys and girls in Kraków, which opened in the preacher's own apartment in 1894. Instruction was given in Polish three times a week in the afternoons. Children learned Bible and Halacha: boys additionally received instruction in reading and writing in Hebrew, translating prayers and the Bible; girls, in reading Hebrew, writing in Yiddish and translating prayers. The institution was modeled on other schools existing in Wrocław, Leipzig, Szczecin and Hanover.⁵⁵

In 1897 the Progressive Association hired a new preacher, Ozjasz Thon, who on June 26, 1899 became a progressive rabbi. The new statute of the Jewish community, adopted in 1897, provided that there should be two rabbis in Kraków – communal and progressive, whose activities would pertain exclusively to the members of the Progressive Association.⁵⁶ This change meant a considerable strengthening of the position of the Progressive Association, which already for a few decades had endeavored to strengthen the position of its preacher. In the next decades, tradition established that, besides a progressive rabbi, the Progressive Association hired a preacher whose activities were ancillary to the du-

⁴⁹ At that time there were two Samuels Landaus at the Seminary and the yearly school reports, including the jubilee report published in 1898, confuse one with another. One S. Landau was born in Warsaw and is listed as a student of the seminary in 1881 to 1886 and later as rabbi in Hanover. Another S. Landau[er], born in Będzin, studied only one year 1878/79. According to the jubilee report, the Landau who received position in Kraków was a graduate of the seminary (which might suggest that he studied longer than one year) and was born in Będzin, cf. Bericht 1898; Jahres-Bericht [1879]; Jahres-Bericht [1882]. The Landau who was later appointed as a preacher in Kraków stated himself that he was born in Będzin. His doctorate was published in Hanover, which might suggest his bonds with this city. Landau's biography requires further study, especially since scarce existing literature confuses not only the two above mentioned Landau's but also third one, Samuel Izaak Landau, a rabbi in Sochaczew (1876-1916), cf. BHR II; Hildesheimer, Eliav 1996, p. 68; Hildesheimer, Eliav 2008, p. 167.

⁵⁰ Landau 1888.

⁵¹ *Ojczyzna* 1890, no. 12; 1891, no. 8.

⁵² *Ojczyzna* 1892, no. 1.

⁵³ Sprawozdanie 1901.

⁵⁴ *Sprawiedliwość* 1894, no. 21.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Statut 1901 § 30.

ties of the rabbi. In the interwar period, this post was granted to Samuel Schmelkes, and two years after Thon's death (and successive nomination of Schmelkes as a progressive rabbi), to Hirsch Pfeffer.⁵⁷ The question of whether Thon's nomination for the preacher post, and successively as a progressive rabbi, resulted in Landau's dismissal from his position, requires further research. It should be noted, however, that at the time Landau still lived in Kraków, he participated actively in communal life and became a member of the rabbinate. He also shared teaching duties with Thon in secondary schools.⁵⁸

Summary

The last quarter of the 19th century should be assessed as a favorable period in the history of the Kraków progressive milieu, in which it significantly grew, broadened its influences and launched several successful charitable initiatives. There were, however, areas in which it was less successful. One of them was finding a proper candidate for the preacher position. Presumably, the most important competence which the progressive milieu sought in a prospective preacher was a university degree and interest in secular studies – this is the only condition, unlike a fluency in the Polish language, which had never been compromised and which, according to progressives was a feature of a “modern rabbi.” In 1875-77 and 1888-90 Tempel was left without a spiritual leader due to the lack of candidates meeting all the requirements and willing to take the position for a relatively low salary. Awareness of the lack of rabbis who would be well-educated, both religiously and academically, and fluent in the Polish language became a reason why progressives in the 1880s proposed opening a rabbinical seminary to educate “Polish rabbis” and include in their curriculum subjects such as Polish literature and the history of Jews in Polish lands. The school, which never opened, was supposed to be modeled on rabbinical seminaries in Wrocław and Pest, and educate rabbis who would serve not only Kraków Jewry, but also other Jewish communities in Polish lands.⁵⁹

In the period discussed the entirety of religious life in Kraków's Tempel remained relatively traditional, although it adopted some innovations, such as a choir and harmonium (not used however during Shabbat), regular sermons, holding wedding ceremonies inside the synagogue, and put emphasis on decorum. In terms of a religious standpoint, Kraków progressives were strongly influenced by the positive-historical Judaism of Zacharias Frankel, by Prague and Vienna's synagogues and by other progressive synagogues in Polish lands (Warsaw, Lviv). They openly opposed German propositions of Reform of Judaism and did not identify themselves with this movement. This modernized traditionalism is especially visible in the biographies of preachers hired at the Tempel in the last quarter of the 19th century, who both studied in orthodox institutions.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Maślak-Maciejewska 2015.

⁵⁸ *Sprawiedliwość* 1899, no. 19, p. 22.

⁵⁹ *Nowa Reforma* 1884, no. 5.

⁶⁰ Proofreading: Kathryn Bailey.

ABBREVIATIONS

ANK = National Archive in Kraków.

AUK Katalogy = Archiv Univerzity Karlova v Praze, Katalogy posluchačů Karlo-Ferdinandovy univerzity 1755-1882 (1892), Filosofická fakulta, inventarní číslo 427, Cataloge über die philosophischen Obligatstudien des Iten und Iiten Jahrgangs an der K.K. Universität zu Prag im Schuljahre 1839: p. 39.

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