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## THE GEOCULTURAL CONDITIONS OF POLISH- ISRAELI DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

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**ABSTRACT:** The article deals with the geocultural conditions of diplomatic relations between Poland and Israel, with particular emphasis on the events in recent years. The author points out that cultural and historical diplomacy is a fundamental vector of Polish-Israeli diplomatic activities which results from these special conditions. At the same time, this area of diplomacy is extremely unstable, susceptible to various fluctuations, depending on external events and circumstances.

**KEYWORDS:** diplomacy, international security, Poland, Israel, Jews

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## GEOKULTUROWE UWARUNKOWANIA POLSKO- IZRAELSKICH RELACJI DYPLOMATYCZNYCH

**ABSTRAKT:** Artykuł dotyczy geokulturowych uwarunkowań dyplomatycznych relacji polsko-izraelskich ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem dynamiki wydarzeń z ostatnich lat. Autor zwraca uwagę, że dyplomacja kulturalna i historyczna stanowi fundamentalny wektor polsko-izraelskich działań dyplomatycznych, co wynika z tych szczególnych uwarunkowań. Zarazem ten obszar dyplomacji jest niezwykle niestabilny, podatny na różne wahania, zależny od wydarzeń i okoliczności zewnętrznych.

**SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:** dyplomacja, bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe, Polska, Izrael, Żydzi

### INTRODUCTION

Diplomacy is the basic form of external state action within the framework of international policy, which is why the term foreign policy is often used interchangeably. Literally, diplomatic activities are understood as the official activities of state entities in the field of international relations, ensuring the protection of the interests of the state and its citizens<sup>1</sup>. A lot of modern security threats can be prevented by effective diplomacy<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Sutor, *Prawo dyplomatyczne i konsularne [Diplomatic and Consular Law]*, Warszawa 2000, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> J. Barcik, *Dyplomacja w systemie bezpieczeństwa narodowego [Diplomacy in the National Security System]*, Wrocław 2014, pp. 48, 49. These threats include: confrontational attitudes; economic, energy, ecological threats,

Diplomacy is directed outside and aims at implementing the current tasks of the foreign policy of the state and protecting its interests in the international environment. The substantive goal of diplomacy in the national dimension is to protect the social, political, economic and cultural interests of the state, while in the supranational dimension it is about developing international relations by effectively overcoming the conflicts of interests of the international community members.

Public diplomacy is playing an increasingly important role in diplomatic activities<sup>3</sup>. Its concept, defined for the first time in the United States, originates from the Cold War and can be translated as a dialogue form of political international communication by influencing public opinion and shaping it through direct channels<sup>4</sup>. In the area of public diplomacy, cultural and historical diplomacy can be distinguished – closely related to cultural security<sup>5</sup>. Cultural and historical diplomacy functions in its area - closely related to cultural security. The framework for cultural diplomacy is determined by a number of projects that allow for positioning the state as open to dialogue while maintaining its strategic cultural position. Cultural and historical diplomacy refer to the soft power of the state<sup>6</sup>, in the sense that Joseph S. Nye introduced this concept in the early 1990s, and in particular – to influence through culture and values<sup>7</sup>, although the concept of cultural diplomacy commonly used today as an art of communication in a multicultural world has long been used in Polish foreign policy<sup>8</sup>. Despite its long-standing presence in the diplomatic practice of many countries, this role remained underestimated, also in the field of scientific discourse<sup>9</sup>.

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international terrorism, organized crime, conflicts on the outskirts of countries, mainly of religious, cultural and ethnic nature.

<sup>3</sup> It is also synonymous with *international public relations*. This term came into circulation in the 1960s thanks to E. Guillion, who thus defined the actions of governments, private groups and individuals to influence the attitudes and opinions of other countries through bilateral communication based on creating the image of the state with a special attention to creating specific cultural codes. The involvement of the society, non-state actors, in particular non-governmental organizations, plays an important role in these activities. See. Beata Ociepka, *Dyplomacja publiczna jako forma komunikowania międzynarodowego* [Public Diplomacy as a Form of International Communication], [in:] B. Ociepka (ed.), *Dyplomacja publiczna* [Public Diplomacy], Wrocław 2008, pp. 11, 12.

<sup>4</sup> B. Ociepka, *Miękka siła i dyplomacja publiczna Polski* [Soft Power and Polish Public Diplomacy], Warszawa 2013, p. 70.

<sup>5</sup> See more: Ibidem, pp. 146-151 and pp. 155-166.

<sup>6</sup> Classic narrative on this topic: J.S. Nye, *The Decline of America's Soft Power. Why Washington Should Worry*, „Foreign Affairs” 5–6 2004, pp. 16–20; J.S. Nye, *Soft power, Jak osiągnąć sukces w polityce światowej* [Soft Power, How to Achieve Success in World Politics], trans. J. Zaborowski, Warszawa 2007.

<sup>7</sup> See: J.S. Nye, *Soft power. Jak osiągnąć sukces w polityce światowej* [Soft Power, How to Achieve Success in World Politics], trans. J. Zaborowski, Warszawa 2007.

<sup>8</sup> See: A. Koseski, *Polska dyplomacja kulturalna po II wojnie światowej* [Polish Cultural Diplomacy After World War II], [in:] *Polska dyplomacja kulturalna po roku 1918* [Polish Cultural Diplomacy After 1918], A. Koseski, A. Stawarz (ed.), Warszawa-Pułtusk 2006.

<sup>9</sup> A. Umińska-Woroniecka, *Niedoceniony potencjał czy przecenione możliwości dyplomacji kulturalnej?, Dyplomacja i bezpieczeństwo. Między wojną i dyplomacją. Polityka zagraniczna Polski w świetle wyzwań na arenie międzynarodowej* [Underestimated Potential or Overestimated Possibilities of Cultural Diplomacy?, Diplomacy and Security. Between War and Diplomacy. Poland's Foreign Policy in the Light of International Challenges] 1(4) 2016, p. 228.

It should be noted here that today, an increasingly important role in conducting cultural diplomacy is attributed to non-state actors, despite the fact that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs remains the main entity responsible for coordinating diplomatic activities<sup>10</sup>.

The main purpose of this article is to analyze the issue of cultural diplomacy as one of the main areas of Polish-Israeli diplomatic relations. Therefore, a comprehensive source query was conducted, based on which the author conducted content analysis, accompanied by elements of comparative and, where necessary, historical analysis. The research problem focused on the main reasons for different narratives in Polish-Israeli diplomatic relations in the sphere of cultural diplomacy, and even more – historical diplomacy. The incompatibility of these narratives can be sought, inter alia, in the geocultural conditions of both countries / nations.

## HISTORICAL CONDITIONS OF POLISH-ISRAELI RELATIONS

Cultural diplomacy is closely related to cultural security, being its integral part,<sup>11</sup> and one of the key soft power tools of the state. Culture contains permanent values that constitute the potential of societies<sup>12</sup>.

In literal form, cultural diplomacy includes the promotion of native culture abroad, international cultural cooperation, cultural conditions of international negotiations, international ideas, projects and initiatives related to culture<sup>13</sup>. The authors of the British *Cultural Diplomacy* report have defined cultural diplomacy as the essence of international relations for which culture is a reservoir of integrating values<sup>14</sup>.

For Polish-Israeli diplomatic relations, given the centuries-old cultural interaction and coexistence in one space, as well as the role that culture plays today in creating the image of both countries on the international stage, cultural diplomacy is one of the fundamental areas of diplomacy. Poland has special relations with the State of Israel. It is also worth noting that in the MENA area, Israel is the only country which Poland maintains significant diplomatic relations with.

Polish-Israeli relations were officially initiated after the proclamation of the State of Israel in May 1948. The political situation of Poland at that time was strongly dependent on the situation of the entire Eastern Bloc with the leading role of the USSR<sup>15</sup>. In the years 1948-1951, Polish-Israeli relations were correct, especially since Poland enabled completely legal

<sup>10</sup> See: S. Gawroński, *Dyplomacja publiczna – komunikowanie międzynarodowe na usługach brandingu narodowego* [Public Diplomacy – International Communication on National Branding Services], “Komunikacja Społeczna. Czasopismo Elektroniczne” 1/2012, pp. 47-55, <http://socialcommunication.edu.pl/nr-112012/>.

<sup>11</sup> P. Kieliszewski, M. Poprawski, *Instytucje publiczne i dyplomacja kulturalna* [Public Institutions and Cultural Diplomacy], “Zarządzanie Publiczne” 3(9) 2009, p. 19.

<sup>12</sup> Extensively on the theoretical framework of cultural security, see: M. Bodziany, *Wewnętrzne uwarunkowania bezpieczeństwa kulturowego Polski*, [Internal Determinants of Poland's Cultural Security], Wrocław 2019, pp. 98-110.

<sup>13</sup> P. Kieliszewski, M. Poprawski, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>14</sup> See: K. Bound, R. Briggs, J. Holden, S. Jones, *Cultural Diplomacy*, London 2007.

<sup>15</sup> See: Bożena Szaynok, *Z historią i Moskwą w tle. Polska a Izrael 1944-1968* [With History and Moscow in the Background. Poland and Israel 1944-1968], Warszawa 2007.

mass *Aliyahs* to Israel, which were most severe in 1949<sup>16</sup>. Israel Barzilaj, a politician with extreme leftist views, a member of the socialist *Mapam* party<sup>17</sup> was hoping for good cooperation between the two countries, supported by Bolesław Bierut's promise of approval of Polish People's Republic and the Soviet Union gave Israel at the UN forum regarding the division of Palestine.

The diplomatic phraseology differed significantly from political realities and was in complete contradiction to the order issued at the same time to surveillance all persons contacting the Israeli embassy, and a special Jordan section was established at the Security Office to monitor all activities of the institution. The first Polish Member of Parliament did not come to Israel until 1954. No Polish delegation was sent to Israel. These activities were dictated to a large extent by the disappointment of the Soviet Union with the change in the course of the foreign policy of the State of Israel, oriented towards the Western and pro-American vector. Contacts with Israel from this period, although described as merely correct, existed in reality<sup>18</sup>. The situation changed radically on June 12, 1967, when the Israeli ambassador in Poland was called to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he was handed a document accusing the State of Israel of aggression against Arab states. Although the actual decision to break diplomatic relations was made in Moscow at a meeting of the Warsaw Pact Advisory Committee with its executive commitment to all Warsaw Pact countries, its last words clearly pointed to the Polish state as responsible for its issuance and implementation<sup>19</sup>. Diplomats leaving Poland were directed straight to the airport, where offensive anti-Israeli slogans accompanied them leaving Poland<sup>20</sup>. The conflict in the Middle East was also an excuse for an anti-Semitic campaign, dictated by alleged concern for "internal security" and the security of Polish citizens. Jews, considered as enemies of the state

<sup>16</sup> These trips were suspended in 1951. By that time, about 28 thousand Jews had left Poland. See: M. Kozłowski, *Polska-Izrael. Przeszłość, dzień dzisiejszy, perspektywy* [Poland-Israel. Past, Present, Perspectives], Warsaw 2004.

<sup>17</sup> The Mapam party proclaimed brotherhood with the Soviet Union, and treated the Kremlin's negative attitude towards Zionism as an ideological error.

<sup>18</sup> J. Dyduch, *Stosunki polsko-izraelskie w latach 1990-2009* [Polish-Israeli Relations in 1990-2009], Warszawa 2010, pp. 16-26.

<sup>19</sup> "(...) in the light of the above, the Government of the Polish People's Republic decided to break diplomatic relations with Israel. The Polish government expects the Israeli ambassador to leave Poland and its staff in the coming days". Officially, the breaking of diplomatic relations with Israel on May 12, 1967 occurred in connection with Israel's aggression in the Middle East. In accordance with art. 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, the breaking of diplomatic relations is defined as a preventive measure which exerts pressure; as a political and legal institution, it is a kind of international (negative) sanction permitted by international law. In the above case, the motivation practiced in Polish People's Republic, resulting from belonging to the Eastern Bloc, was used to break diplomatic relations by one state with respect to another as a result of its relations with a third state (third states / region). See: Edward J. Pałyga, *Dyplomacja Polski Ludowej 1944-1984 (kierunki-treści-mechanizmy)* [People's Polish Diplomacy 1944-1984 (Directions-Contents-Mechanisms)], Warsaw 1986, pp. 81-84.

<sup>20</sup> The article was published in the weekly "Polityka" in May 2008; R. Frister, *Trudne polsko-izraelskie stosunki. Zaczęło się od dyplomacji na niby* [Difficult Polish-Israeli Relations. It Started with "Fake" Diplomacy] "Polityka" 9 Jul. 2019, <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/klassypolityki/1798370,1,trudne-polsko-izraelskie-stosunki-zaczelo-sie-od-dyplomacji-na-niby.read>. The author of the article, Roman Frister, writer, publicist, journalist, was a prisoner of concentration camps in Mauthausen and Auschwitz; in 1957 he emigrated to Israel, where for many years he collaborated with the daily "Haaretz".

regime and people's power, were forced to leave Poland, and the one-way ticket became the most readable symbol of broken relations.

In the late 1960s, Polish-Israeli relations could not have happened otherwise, despite the shared historical experience, centuries of coexistence and cultural influences. Polish-Israeli, and thus Polish-Jewish paths diverged due to the geopolitical conditions, which are an implication of "the new world order" established by the great powers after World War II. After breaking diplomatic relations with the State of Israel, the main area of activity that could be called a kind of public (cultural) diplomacy was propaganda. The Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP), in the party's propaganda centers gave lectures in which the image of the Six-Day War as "the Israeli invasion" was created. An example of this is the twenty-page brochure published in 1967 by Witold Skuratowicz in the party propaganda center of the PUWP Warsaw Committee, entitled *The genesis of the Arab-Israeli conflict* – a transcript of a lecture given earlier<sup>21</sup>. In the next year, the publishing house of the Ministry of National Defense published a propaganda publication of Zbigniew Domarańczyk *Israeli aggression 1967*<sup>22</sup>. In 1968, Kazimierz Wilnowski published a book under the metaphorical title *Crimes of the One-Eyed Hawk*. This one-eyed hawk is Moshe Dayan, the national hero of Israel, one of the designers of his great victory in the Six-Day War.<sup>23</sup> In Wilnowski's narrative hawk was inscribed in the grim picture of Israeli invasion, victims among Arab soldiers and civilians, the use of heavy artillery, mortars and armored forces in the West Bank of Jordan in February 1968 at the villages and refugee camps<sup>24</sup>.

## RECONSTRUCTION. MEMORY DISCOURSES

When Mordechaj Palzur, the Israeli ambassador in Santo Domingo, received an official order from Jerusalem in October 1985 to be prepared for new commitments, a new period in Polish-Israeli relations was opening. On November 7, 1986, Mordechaj Palzur landed in Warsaw as the first Israeli diplomat in Polish People's Republic since 1967; officially as the head of Israeli interests mission at the Dutch embassy<sup>25</sup>.

At the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, Jewish life began to rebuild in Poland. At that time the authorities of the Polish People's Republic were preparing the ground for renewing Polish-Israeli relations. In 1978, during one of the press conferences, the then First Secretary of the PUWP Central Committee Edward Gierek expressed intention to resume diplomatic relations with Israel, provided that the Palestinian issue was resolved. In 1984 during the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly in New York, it was the first time since the Six-Day War that foreign

<sup>21</sup> See: W. Skuratowicz, *Geneza konfliktu arabsko-izraelskiego [The Origin of the Arab-Israeli Conflict]*, Warszawa 1967.

<sup>22</sup> See: Z. Domarańczyk, *Agresja izraelska 1967 [Israeli Aggression 1967]*, Warszawa 1968.

<sup>23</sup> On June 2, 1967, Moshe Dayan was appointed minister of defense to strengthen the morale of Israelis.

<sup>24</sup> K. Wilnowski, *Zbrodnie jednookiego jastrzębia [Crimes of the One-Eyed Hawk]*, Warszawa 1970, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> On February 27, 1990, Mordechaj Palzur became the Israeli ambassador to Poland, but he ended his mission after a few months.



ministers of Poland and Israel met. A year later, Wojciech Jaruzelski during the next 40<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly met with the chairman of the World Jewish Congress Edgar Bronfman; and Foreign Minister Marian Orzechowski met with Israel's Foreign Minister – Yitzhak Shamir. The effect of these meetings was the decision to establish diplomatic representations in both countries<sup>26</sup>. It is worth noting here that there was already ground in Poland for the development of later public diplomacy – especially cultural diplomacy – Jewish life was reviving, which laid the foundations for its later institutionalization<sup>27</sup>. In September 1986, the Israeli Interest Section was opened in Warsaw, and in 1987 the Polish mission in Tel Aviv.

Officially, however, it was the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, the collapse of the USSR, the Warsaw Pact, and the end of Poland's allied commitments to the vectors of the "people's democracy" policy that allowed full rebirth of Polish-Israeli relations on new, democratic principles. The external exemplification of this state of affairs was the opening of the embassy. The official protocol opening a new stage of Polish-Israeli relations was signed on February 27, 1990, during the official visit of the Israeli diplomat Moshe Arens. Undoubtedly, the long period of diplomatic silence and even hostility on both sides meant that positive changes took place slowly. In the initial period of rebuilding the relationship, an important role was played by the human factor, hence the huge role was played by public diplomacy, especially cultural diplomacy.

Cultural cooperation vectors were signed with bilateral agreements, thanks to which the exchange of educators and youth, scientific, didactic and cultural cooperation began on a large scale. Considering that the diplomatic relations of Poland and Israel are a natural continuation of the joint centuries-old Polish-Jewish history, they particularly need issues related to cultural, educational exchange, and memory policy. They constitute the foundation of thinking about the cultural determinants of the security of contemporary Jews in Poland. Signing bilateral agreements regulating issues related to broadly understood cultural security, also affecting the situation of the Jewish community in Poland and the perception of the Jewish environment in the Polish environment has become significant in the field of this cooperation. The first agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the State of Israel on cultural, scientific and educational cooperation was already signed in May 1991. It drew attention to the centuries-old tradition of coexistence of Poles and Jews on Polish soil, as well as the huge contribution of Polish Jews to the cultural heritage of both nations. Therefore, it is in the interest of both countries signing the agreement to develop cooperation in the field of culture, art, science, education, information sharing and interpersonal contacts – for peace, justice and security<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> J. Sierańska, *Polityka zagraniczna Polski wobec Izraela po 1989 roku [Poland's Foreign Policy Towards Israel after 1989]*, Toruń 2018, p. 88.

<sup>27</sup> See: R. Tarasiuk, *Kulturowe uwarunkowania współczesnego bezpieczeństwa społeczności żydowskiej w Polsce [Cultural conditions of contemporary security of the Jewish community in Poland]*, Siedlce 2018.

<sup>28</sup> *Umowa między Rządem Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej a Rządem Państwa Izrael o współpracy kulturalnej, naukowej i oświatowej, podpisana w Jerozolimie dnia 22 maja 1991 r. [Agreement Between the Government of*

In the 1990s, however, Poland did not have uniform standards in historical education regarding controversial events arising from the joint history of the two countries, which not only concerned Polish-Jewish relations.

Shaping the narrative of each state's historical policy is a message to the international community. It is particularly noticeable when organizing and participating in anniversary celebrations. The role of this area of diplomacy is to properly create educational policy, strive to broaden the knowledge, to prevent conflicts caused by difficult historical events. This can be done by joint historical textbooks developed by expert teams composed of representatives of the two countries, agreeing on a certain consensus and considering the position of both parties<sup>29</sup>.

## DISPUTES ABOUT HISTORY

The historical dispute about Jedwabne, the silent place of the Jewish tragedy for years, was initiated in the space of public debate by the Polish edition of Jan Tomasz Gross's *Sąsiedzi* [*Neighbors*]<sup>30</sup>. First of all, he realized that there were unrecognized places related to the Holocaust<sup>31</sup>. The Jedwabne case has also become a challenge for the revision of Polish memory policy<sup>32</sup>. The publication of Jan Tomasz Gross destroyed the canon, or, as Aleida Assmann defines it, "a closed set of images of the past", "made up of obvious and unquestioned facts", formulating "specific claims and setting a certain goal"<sup>33</sup>.

It should be noted, however, that at the same time there were many positive aspects of Polish-Israeli cooperation, to mention, for example, the cooperation of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance (Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej – IPN) initiated in May 2000 with the Israeli Institute the Remembrance of Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust (Yad Vashem). In 2000, the Polish Institute began operating in Tel Aviv, which, apart from classic activities for the promotion of Polish art, film and language literature in Israel abroad, focuses on an extremely important educational exchange. Also in 2000, Pope John Paul II visited Israel.

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*the Republic of Poland and the Government of the State of Israel on Cultural, Scientific and Educational Cooperation, Signed in Jerusalem on May 22, 1991* [Dz.U. z 1991 r, Nr 16, poz. 60].

<sup>29</sup> B. Ociepka, *Miękka siła i dyplomacja publiczna Polski...* [*Soft Power and Polish Public Diplomacy...*], pp. 155-156.

<sup>30</sup> See: J.T. Gross, *Sąsiedzi. Historia zagłady żydowskiego miasteczka* [*Neighbors. History of the Extermination of the Jewish Town*], Sejny 2000. E. Janicka, T. Żukowski, *Przemoc antysemitcka? Nowe polskie narracje o Żydach po roku 2000* [*Anti-Semitic Violence? New Polish Narratives About Jews After 2000*], Warszawa 2016.

<sup>31</sup> See also: I. Grudzińska-Gross, J.T. Gross, *Złote żniwa. Rzecz o tym, co się działo na obrzeżach Zagłady* [*Golden Harvest. A Thing About What Happened On the Outskirts of the Holocaust*], Kraków 2011; M. Tryczyk, *Miasta śmierci* [*Cities of Death*], Warsaw 2015; M. Tryczyk, *Drzazga. Kłamstwa silniejsze niż śmierć* [*Splinters. Lies Stronger Than Death*], Krakow 2020.

<sup>32</sup> *Akt skruchy i co dalej?* [*The Act of Repentance and What Next?*] The editorial conversation of Marcin Król, Paweł Śpiewak and Marek Zaleski, "Res Publica Nowa" 2001, No. 7, pp. 50-51; see. also: P. Machcewicz, K. Persak (ed.), *Wokół Jedwabnego* [*Around Jedwabne*], Warsaw 2002.

<sup>33</sup> Quote after: M. Łuczewski, *Kapitał moralny. Polityki historyczne w późnej nowoczesności* [*Moral Capital. Historical Policies in Late Modernity*], Krakow 2017, p. 93. See also: A. Polonsky, J.B. Michlic, *The Neighbors Respond: The Controversy over the Jedwabne Massacre in Poland*, Princeton 2009.

It was an important event, despite difficulties with the acceptance by the orthodox Israeli rabbinate of certain aspects of the proposal for interreligious dialogue<sup>34</sup>.

The memory of the Holocaust divided Poles and Jews even before the publication of Jan Tomasz Gross. Auschwitz remains forever in the center of Jewish memory as a symbol of the annihilated world. For Poles, it is also a symbol of the cruelty of World War II and the tragedy of many nations. Polish-Jewish writer Henryk Grynberg wrote that “Oświęcim means the Holocaust. It is a symbol and a holy place. More than Jerusalem. And more important for God and for people. All people. But it is Jewish property, unfortunately (...) In a world where even the Jews’ right to Jerusalem is questioned, everything seems possible, but at least Oświęcim should be an exclusive Jewish property<sup>35</sup>”. Because of this holiness, the Jews, not only religious, oppose the placement of any other symbols there, and the exemplifications of this opposition were: the case of the Carmelite nuns’ monastery lasting in the years 1984-1993, nearly a decade dispute over crosses on a gravel pit, or a *Holocaust survivors*’ protest against desacralization of the Holocaust sites in front of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in New York or against plans to build a hypermarket in the vicinity of the camp gate. In the context of these seemingly expiring disputes, in June 1998 Kalman Sultanik, vice president of the World Jewish Congress proposed the extraterritoriality of former Nazi concentration and extermination camps, especially Auschwitz-Birkenau. The then Chief Rabbi of Poland Pinchas Menachem Joskowitz was also in favor of the extraterritoriality of Auschwitz<sup>36</sup>.

The problem of Israelis’ perception of Poland only in the context of the places of the Jewish tragedy is one of the factors hindering the agreement. Maciej Kozłowski, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Israel in the years 1999-2003, drew attention to the organizational weakness of Israeli youth groups taking place in the 90s in Poland, focused mainly on the Holocaust sites, potentially strengthening negative stereotypes about Poland and Poles. Therefore, in addition to exposing the tragedy, it is also important to familiarize young Israelis with the centuries-old history before the Holocaust, the coexistence of both nations on Polish soil. All initiatives promoting the history and culture of Poland, including publications, serve this purpose<sup>37</sup>. Also important were the changes that took place after 1998 in the organization of the March of the Living, which, in the initial phase, was completely isolated from the Israeli youth participating in it<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> See also: B.L. Shervin, H. Kasimow, *Jan Paweł II i dialog międzyreligijny [John Paul II and Interreligious Dialogue]*, Cracow 2001.

<sup>35</sup> H. Grynberg, *Prawda nieartystyczna [Non-Artistic Truth]*, Katowice 1990, p. 88.

<sup>36</sup> ‘Życie’, 05.06.1998; zob. szerzej na ten temat: Genevieve Zubrzycki, *The Crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland*, Chicago 2006.

<sup>37</sup> An example is the brochure presenting the culture and history of Poland, published in English and Hebrew, thanks to the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. See. Maciej Kozłowski, *Polska-Izrael. Przeszłość... [Poland-Israel. Past...]*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>38</sup> Since 1998, apart from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the then Polish Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek also participated in the march, which positively influenced the image of cooperation between both countries and nations in building historical memory.



In the report from 2013-2014, an important dimension of public diplomacy was indicated, referring to, inter alia, events related to the promotion of Polish culture in Tel Aviv – like a week of Polish cuisine, or the exhibition of Alina Szapocznikow *Body Traces* at the Museum of Art, recognized by the daily “Haaretz” as one of the ten most important exhibitions in Israel in 2014. The event was also accompanied by the performance of *See Her Change* by Israeli choreographer Yasmien Godder and a seminar with Ahuva Israel, Lior Avizoor and Andy Rottenberg<sup>39</sup>. In Polish-Jewish relations, this year was dominated by historical diplomacy in connection with the centenary of the birth of Jan Karski. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs proclaimed 2014 as the Year of Jan Karski, recognized as one of the key figures of Polish-Jewish dialogue. Together with many institutions, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs initiated a program of about 200 educational projects, for which a whole spectrum of public information tools was used, for example, an expert conference at the European Parliament, initiating the celebration of the Jan Karski Year, discussion panels in Berlin, Washington, Chicago, Claremont, California, and finally in London, where in addition the Embassy of the Republic of Poland organized a screening of the film *Posłaniec z Polski* [A Messenger from Poland] in the Central Synagogue. The ceremony of Jan Karski Award in New York, founded by the Polish-Jewish Dialogue Committee and the premiere of the performance *Remember This: Walking with Jan Karski* was also important; as well as the opening of the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw in 2014<sup>40</sup>.

An important role of Polish historical diplomacy is caring about the reliability of historical knowledge transferred abroad and using adequate terminology. It is especially about using abroad – in the journalistic but also political discourse – the term *Polish concentration camp*, suggesting the Polish crime of genocide. An example of opposition to such practices was the *Defective Memory Codes. Distorting the Memory of German Nazi Concentration Camps in Media Abroad* conference organized at the University of Warsaw on 11 October 2013. In 2013, Polish embassies intervened on the phrase “Polish concentration camps” 107 times, in 2014 – 152 times<sup>41</sup>. Numerous campaigns with the participation of non-state actors, mainly non-governmental organizations, supported this type of activities<sup>42</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> *Nowe wymiary dyplomacji. Dyplomacja publiczna. Raport 2013-2014*, Biuletyn Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych 2014 [New Dimensions of Diplomacy. Public Diplomacy. Report 2013-2014, Bulletin of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2014], p. 94.

<sup>40</sup> It is worth noting that the criticism of the construction of the POLIN Museum has never been expressed by any of the critically acclaimed environments straightforward to imply conflicts. Shortly after the museum was opened, its then director Dariusz Stola emphasized that Polish-Jewish history has very difficult moments, but it should be remembered that Jews in Poland are not only pogroms and the Holocaust, they are also a unique culture that they created in Polish lands, which differed significantly from those which originated in other countries. See on this topic: M. Łuczewski, *Kapitał moralny. Polityki historyczne w późnej nowoczesności* [Moral Capital. Historical Policies in Late Modernity], Krakow 2017, p. 236.

<sup>41</sup> *New Dimensions of Diplomacy. Public Diplomacy. Report ...*, p. 50. It is worth noting that in 2007 the official UNESCO nomenclature changed the name of the concentration camp in Oświęcim to The Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945).

<sup>42</sup> Among them, as part of the *German Death Camps* action, one may mention the NGO “Reduta Dobrego Imienia – Polska Liga przeciw Zniesławieniom” [“Reduta of Good Name – Polish League Against Defamation”] or the private accusation of the German state-owned ZDF station for using the term “Polish extermination camps

Regarding museums, referring here to 2019, the Warsaw Ghetto Museum can play an important role in creating a narrative of memory, because collective memory is particularly visible in the museum space<sup>43</sup>. The more so because in Poland the narrative of memory is dominated in the spaces of former Nazi concentration and extermination camps, it is also worth carrying it out where the first phase of the final solution was carried out<sup>44</sup>.

In January 2018, a draft amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance was prepared by Deputy Minister of Justice Patrick Jaki, which led to the inhibition of opportunities for further dynamic development of positive relations in the sphere of remembrance policy<sup>45</sup>. The projected predictability of a sentence of up to three years imprisonment for attributing joint responsibility for the crimes of the Holocaust to the Polish state and Poles met with negative feedback from Jewish communities who saw censorship and blocking the memory of the Holocaust in this action. It was considered shameful towards the victims and their heirs. The amendment to the Act in Article 55a assumed that “anyone who publicly and contrary to the facts attributes to the Polish nation or Polish state responsibility or joint responsibility for crimes committed by the Third German Reich or other crimes against humanity, peace and war crimes – shall be punishable by a fine or imprisonment up to three years for grossly diminishing the responsibility of the actual perpetrators of these crimes”.

In February 2018, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki participated in the Security Conference in Munich, where during a panel on the future of Europe in the presence of the Israeli journalist of “The New York Times” Ronen Bergman responded to his question regarding the penalization of Holocaust testimonies in accordance with the amended Act on the Institute National Remembrance, saying that among the perpetrators of the Holocaust

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at Majdanek and Auschwitz”. This initiative was a direct reaction to the statement of the Russian Minister of Culture Vladimir Medvedev in Sobibór during the ceremony of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, where a Russian politician took part in the ceremony of laying flowers, commemorating Soviet prisoners of war who died in Sobibór. Quote after: M. Łuczewski, *Kapitał moralny... [Moral Capital...]*, p. 22. See also: B. Ociepka, *Miękka siła... [Soft Power...]*, p. 166. It should be emphasized that a number of civic, individual and collective activities related to historical memory and various ways of consolidating it could already be observed in the early 90s of the twentieth century, shortly after the political transformation that opened the way to various civic initiatives. See: R. Habielski, *Przeszłość w sferze publicznej i życiu kulturalnym 1989-2005 (obszary zainteresowań, interpretacje, nośniki) [Past in the Public Sphere and Cultural Life 1989-2005 (Areas of Interest, Interpretations, Carriers)]*, [in:] P. Skibiński, T. Wiścicki, M. Wysocki (ed.), *Historycy i politycy, Polityka pamięci w III RP [Historians and Politicians, Remembrance Policy in the Third Republic]*, Warsaw 2011, p. 84.

<sup>43</sup> The Warsaw Ghetto Museum was officially established on February 28, 2018, and on March 7, 2018, a conference devoted to its appointment was organized in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister with the participation of Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki and the Minister of Culture and National Heritage Piotr Gliński.

<sup>44</sup> See more: R. Tarasiuk, *Edukacja o Holokauście, totalitaryzmach i ludobójstwach jako wyzwanie dla nauk o bezpieczeństwie [Education on the Holocaust, Totalitarianisms and Genocide as a Challenge for Security Studies]*, [in:] A. Glen (ed.) *Jednoczenie wiedzy w naukach o bezpieczeństwie [The Unification of Knowledge in Security Studies]*, Siedlce 2020.

<sup>45</sup> *Ustawa z dnia 26 stycznia 2018 r. o zmianie ustawy o Instytucji Pamięci Narodowej – Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, ustawy o grobach i cmentarzach wojennych, ustawy o muzeach oraz ustawy o odpowiedzialności podmiotów zbiorowych za czyny zabronione pod groźbą kary [The Act of 26 January 2018 Amending the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance - Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation, the Act on War Graves and Cemeteries, the Act on Museums and the Act on the Liability of Collective Entities Under Penalty]* (Dz.U.2018.369 14.02.2018).

there were also Jews. The problem surrounding this statement showed that the language has a strategic role in diplomacy, and the imprecision of terms in this case cast a shadow on Polish-Israeli relations, strained since the amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance. “The New York Times” critically referred to both the words of Morawiecki, spoken at the conference and his visit to the cemetery, where he laid flowers on the graves of the soldiers of the Świętokrzyska Brigade of the National Armed Forces, seeing in both the negative impact on the international image of Poland and the cause increased tensions between Poland and Israel<sup>46</sup>. Paradoxically, this visit of the Polish Prime Minister was to end the dispute on the Warsaw-Jerusalem relations<sup>47</sup>. In June 2018, controversial provisions were removed from the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance<sup>48</sup>.

The opportunity for the Polish side to engage in creating a positive image of cooperation became the 70th anniversary of the State of Israel’s proclamation, which Polish President Andrzej Duda used in a congratulatory message to President Reuven Rivlin, paying attention to the common history and cultural heritage, the centenary of Poland regaining independence and 75th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The Polish president also referred to the security issues in the Middle East, emphasizing that Poland, as a member of the UN Security Council in 2018-2019, will take decisive action in this regard<sup>49</sup>.

The Middle East conference, held on February 13-14, 2019 in Warsaw, devoted to the issues of peace and security in the MENA region, again divided Poles and Jews in matters of remembrance policy, affecting diplomatic relations. The beginning of the dispute can be considered the report from Warsaw of the American journalist MSNBC Andrea Mitchell, during which the wording was made that the Jewish insurgents in the Warsaw ghetto had been opposed to the Polish and Nazi regime for over a month. Faced with a constant wave of protests from the Polish side, the journalist apologized for this unfortunate statement<sup>50</sup>. At the same time, the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, a representative of right-wing Likud, Israel Katz referred to the issue of the Holocaust dividing Poles and Jews, reaching for the

<sup>46</sup> (mpw), *Times of Israel: Premier Morawiecki wywołuje kolejne kontrowersje w Monachium* [*Times of Israel: Prime Minister Morawiecki Causes Further Controversy in Munich*], 18 Feb. 2018, [https://www.rmf24.pl/raporty/raport-spor-ustawe-ipn/fakty/news-times-of-israel-premier-morawiecki-wywoluje-kolejne-kontrowe,nId,2546510#utm\\_source=paste&utm\\_medium=paste&utm\\_campaign=chrome](https://www.rmf24.pl/raporty/raport-spor-ustawe-ipn/fakty/news-times-of-israel-premier-morawiecki-wywoluje-kolejne-kontrowe,nId,2546510#utm_source=paste&utm_medium=paste&utm_campaign=chrome) (17.03.2020).

<sup>47</sup> B.T. Wielński, *W Monachium Morawiecki wspomniął o „żydowskich sprawcach”. Polsko-izraelski kryzys dyplomatyczny znów się rozpali?* [*In Munich, Morawiecki Mentioned “Jewish perpetrators”. The Polish-Israeli Diplomatic Crisis Will Ignite Again?*] „Gazeta Wyborcza”, 17 Feb. 2018.

<sup>48</sup> *Ustawa z dnia 27 czerwca 2018 r. o zmianie ustawy o Instytucie Pamięci Narodowej – Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu oraz ustawy o odpowiedzialności podmiotów zbiorowych za czyny zabronione pod groźbą kary* [*Act of 27 June 2018 Amending the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance - Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes Against the Polish Nation and the Act on the Liability of Collective Entities for Offenses Under Penalty*] (Dz. U. z 2018 r., poz. 1277)

<sup>49</sup> (pk/mtom), „Rok 2018 jest dla obu naszych państw szczególnie”. Prezydent Duda napisał do prezydenta Izraela, [*“The Year 2018 is Special for Both of Our Countries.” President Duda wrote to the President of Israel*, Tvn24 19 Apr. 2018, <https://tvn24.pl/polska/prezydent-andrzej-duda-w-depeszy-gratulacyjnej-do-izraelczykow-ra830871-2361679> (17.03.2020).

<sup>50</sup> (ŁZ, MNIE), „Powstanie w getcie było walką przeciwko polskiemu i nazistowskiemu reżimowi” [*The Ghetto Uprising Was a Fight Against the Polish and Nazi Regime*] Tvp.inf 14 Feb. 2019, <https://www.tvp.info/41301696/powstanie-w-getcie-bylo-walka-przeciwko-polskiemu-i-nazistowskiemu-rezimowi> (17.03.2020).

stereotype of Poles inheriting anti-Semitism. The words of the Israeli minister, referring to the statements of former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir of 1996, cited in 2019 caused a diplomatic scandal among the Polish ruling elite. During the Middle East Summit, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also referred to the areas of remembrance policy, the Holocaust, and above all the content of the amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance, emphasizing that the Jewish side perceives primarily historical revisionism in these contents. words of both Minister Katz and the statement of Prime Minister Netanyahu touched on the sensitive issue separating both sides – the memory of the Holocaust.

In response to the diplomatic tension created during the Middle East conference, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki cancelled his participation in the Visegrad Group summit planned in Jerusalem. A further implication of the turmoil around the V4 summit was the cancellation of the entire event. Asked in this context about the possibility of worsening diplomatic relations on the Poland-Israel line, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki replied that the organization of a Middle East conference in Poland was proof of Poland's strong position in the international arena, also in the Middle Eastern security in the context of the migration crisis, as well as through increasing the military presence of NATO and the US on Polish territory.

The effects of another disputable issue that arose during the Middle East conference were visible in Poland until May 2019. This was related to the statement of the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who asked Poland on the settlement of matters related to reprivatization of Jewish heirless property as a property owed to Holocaust victims. The American politician referred directly to the *JUST Act* of 2017 on the return of property of Holocaust victims. Signed by US President Donald Trump, the Justice for Uncompensated Survivors Today (JUST), regarding the restitution of property of victims of the Holocaust, was adopted in December 2017 by the U.S. Congress and registered in the journal of laws as S 447 (hence its colloquial name in Poland Act 447), and at the end of April 2018 it was adopted by the House of Representatives.

The JUST Act is an American law that requires the State Department to submit to the US Congress by November 2019 a one-time report on the state of implementation of the Terezin Declaration signed by 46 countries, including Poland, on June 30, 2009<sup>51</sup>. In May 2019, the US Ambassador in Poland, Georgette Mosbacher stated that the JUST Act imposes no financial or legal burden on any state or institution, but is only a one-off report for the American Congress to analyze the progress of work of individual signatory states in the field of restitution<sup>52</sup>. The contents of Law 447 have become part of political narrative for some communities in Poland, for example in the campaign before the European Parliament elections conducted by the KORWIN Confederation, Braun, and Liroy Nationalists. At that

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<sup>51</sup> The Terezin Declaration, regarding the victims of the Holocaust and other Nazi persecutions, was signed on behalf of the Polish government by Władysław Bartoszewski, then the representative of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland for international dialogue as the Secretary of State.

<sup>52</sup> See more: *Zestawienie informacji na temat tzw. ustawy JUST z 2017 roku (Justice for Uncompensated Survivors Today)*, [https://pl.usembassy.gov/pl/just\\_pl/](https://pl.usembassy.gov/pl/just_pl/) (17.02.2020).



time, also against Act 447 under the slogan “Stop 447 against Jewish claims”, Prawica RP (The Right Wing of the Republic), Młodzież Wszechpolska (All-Polish Youth), Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny ABC (ABC National Radical Camp), Federacja dla Rzeczypospolitej (Federation for the Republic) and other ultra-right organizations organized a joint march on the route of the Prime Minister’s office - the American embassy, accompanied by slogans: “I don’t apologize for Jedwabne”<sup>53</sup>, “Down with the Jewish occupation”, “Holocaust enterprise”<sup>54</sup> or “Poles are not responsible for the murder in Jedwabne”<sup>55</sup>. The content of election posters also referred to Act 447. At that time Elan Carr – Special Representative of the US State Department for Monitoring and Combating Anti-Semitism, stayed in Poland<sup>56</sup>.

In January 2020, the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp took place. The issue of understanding the symbolism of Auschwitz once again dominated the activities in the field of public diplomacy, which was an implication of a dispute about history. In Israel, the main celebrations of this anniversary were held on January 23 as the World Holocaust Forum and were organized by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation, together with the authorities of the State of Israel, at the Yad Vashem Institute. The absence of the Polish representative at these celebrations indicated a coolness of relationship, evoked by a sense of affront against the inability to speak at international forums. The absence of Polish President Andrzej Duda at the Israeli ceremonies, who justified this in a conversation with the Israeli president with indelicacy, which was the omission of the importance of Poles’ participation in the fight against the Nazi occupier, pointed to a significant slip in diplomatic relations between states. The director of the Yad Vashem, Avner Shalev, a former soldier of the Israeli Armed Forces, expressing his regret over the absence of the Polish president, explained it with the issue of “misunderstanding the goals of this event.”<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup> The popularity of this slogan does not cease, despite the fact that the prosecutor’s office in Białystok recognized it as hate speech in 2013. Via the Internet, you can still buy clothing with the slogan “I don’t apologize for Jedwabne”.

<sup>54</sup> The term that Norman Finkelstein first used in 2000 in the title of the famous book *The Holocaust Industry. Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering*. See also: Polish edition: Norman Finkelstein, *Przedsiębiorstwo Holokaust*, Warsaw 2001.

<sup>55</sup> R. Łuczyn, *Skrajna prawica gra roszczeniami. Antysemityzm się oplaci?* [*The Far Right Claims. Will Anti-Semitism Pay off?*], “Polityka” 11 May 2019, <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/kraj/1792476,1,skrajna-prawica-gra-rozsczeniami-antysemityzm-sie-oplaci.read> (17.03.2020).

<sup>56</sup> Elan Carr stressed that the rise of anti-Semitic sentiment is a global problem and pointed to three potential causes: aggressive anti-Israeli Iranian policy, global anti-Zionism and the rise of supremacism against other minorities; *Przedstawiciel USA: ustawa 447 nie przypisuje Polakom win za zbrodnie nazistów* [*US representative: Act 447 Does Not Attribute Poles the Blame for Nazi Crimes*], tvn24, 9 May 2019, <https://tvn24.pl/polska/ustawa-447-komentuje-elan-carr-przedstawiciel-usa-do-spraw-walki-z-antysemityzmem-ra934126-2285548> (18.03.2020).

<sup>57</sup> It is also worth noting that in the documentary screened during the World Holocaust Forum in the context of anti-Semitism, Polish threads appeared again, such as anti-Jewish content claimed by ultra-rightists during the Independence March, or a recording of an anti-immigrant demonstration organized in 2015 by ONR, during which the puppet of Jew was burned. The vice president of the Association of Independence March announced, on one of the social media, the investigation of justice in court due to insults in the film of Polish patriotic circles. See: Maciej Orłowski, *W Jerozolimie trwają obchody 75. rocznicy wyzwolenia Auschwitz* [*The Celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz in Jerusalem*], wyborcza.pl, 23 Jan. 2020 (live coverage), <https://wyborcza.pl/relacje/14,126862,25625741.html> (17.03.2020).



A few days later, on January 27, state ceremonies were organized by the Polish side at the site of the former Nazi camp in Auschwitz, to which many significant foreign guests were invited, including former camp prisoners. The celebrations were broadcast live on public television.

## CONCLUSIONS

The events of World War II are one of the main factors antagonizing Jews and Poles<sup>58</sup>. For Poles, the phenomena of *szmalcownictwo* (blackmail)<sup>59</sup>, exposed in many recent historical publications, which is vividly remembered in Jewish environments, destroy the martyrological vision of Polish history of the times of war and occupation, which is either taboo or an accusation of historical revisionism, particularly difficult to accept. These are also anti-Jewish pogroms on a larger scale than the inter-war pogroms. The fact that Jedwabne was not an isolated event and the anti-Jewish pogroms had a larger dimension than the interwar ones could be another card in the dispute over memory<sup>60</sup>. Conflicts around memory narratives have been the main cause of diplomatic disputes on the Warsaw-Jerusalem line in recent years.

According to diplomat Maciej Kozłowski, a dangerous phenomenon affecting mutual relations is not materialized anti-Semitism, but stereotypes functioning in social consciousness and indifference towards anti-Semitism. This is dangerous even more because Poland and Israel are doomed to a special type of diplomatic relations, in the area of which the difficult and tragic past of both nations falls. Many problems in this matter need to be resolved, in many cases there is a need for permanent monitoring and supervision. Relations between Poles and the Jewish community in Poland also overlap with Polish-Israeli relations<sup>61</sup>. Geocultural conditions of

<sup>58</sup> L.M. Nijakowski, *Polska polityka pamięci. Esej socjologiczny* [Polish Memory Policy. Sociological Essay], Warszawa 2008, pp. 165-174.

<sup>59</sup> Also spelled *shmaltsownik* – a pejorative Polish slang that was used during World War II for a person who blackmailed Jews.

<sup>60</sup> See: M. Tryczyk, *Miasta śmierci. Sąsiedzkie pogromy Żydów* [Cities of Death. Neighborly Pogroms of Jews], Warsaw 2015; M. Tryczyk, *Drzazga. Kłamstwa silniejsze niż śmierć* [Splinters. Lies Stronger Than Death], Krakow 2020; from extensive, widely documented works on this subject, see also: J. Grabowski, B. Engelking, A. Skibińska, *Zarys krajobrazu. Wieś polska wobec zagłady Żydów 1942-1945* [Outline of the Landscape. Polish Village and the Extermination of Jews 1942-1945], Warszawa 2012; B. Engelking, J. Leociak, D. Libionka (ed.), *Prowincja noc. Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* [Province by Night. The Life and Extermination of Jews in the Warsaw District], Warszawa 2007; B. Engelking, *Jest taki piękny słoneczny dzień... Losy Żydów szukających ratunku na wsi polskiej 1942-1945* [It is Such a Beautiful Sunny Day... The Fate of Jews Seeking Help in the Polish Countryside 1942-1945], Warszawa 2012; B. Engelking, T. Frydel, J. Grabowski, *Dalej jest noc. Losy Żydów w wybranych powiatach okupowanej Polski* [Next is the Night. The Fate of Jews in Selected Poviats of the Occupied Poland], vol. 1-2, Warszawa 2018; B. Engelking, J. Grabowski, *Żydów łamiących prawo należy karać śmiercią! „Przestępczość” Żydów w Warszawie 1939-1942* [Jews Breaking the Law Should be Punished with Death! “Crimes” of Jews in Warsaw 1939-1942], Warszawa 2012; T. Markiel, A. Skibińska, *Jakie to ma znaczenie, czy zrobili to z chciwości? Zagłada domu Tryncherów* [What Does it Matter, Did They Do It Out of Greed? Tryncher’s Extermination], Warszawa 2011; B. Engelking, „Szanowny panie gistapo”. *Donosy do władz niemieckich w Warszawie i okolicach w latach 1940-1941* [„Dear Mr Gistapo”. Reports to German Suthorities in and around Warsaw in 1940-1941], Warszawa 2003; J. Grabowski, *Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland*, Bloomington 2013; J. Grabowski, *Judenjagd. Polowanie na Żydów 1942-1945. Studium dziejów pewnego powiatu* [Judenjagd. Hunting for Jews 1942-1945. A Study of the History of a Poviats], Warsaw 2011.

<sup>61</sup> M. Kozłowski, *Polska-Israel. Przeszłość...* [Poland-Israel. Past ...], p. 33; See also: R. Tarasiuk, *Kulturowe uwarunkowania współczesnego bezpieczeństwa społeczności żydowskiej w Polsce* [Cultural Conditions of Contemporary Security of the Jewish Community in Poland], Siedlce 2018.

Polish-Israeli diplomatic activities are soft power in relations not only between states, but also between people. That is why public diplomacy plays a special role, especially since culture is also an important aspect in Israel's foreign policy and is important in building its image on the international stage. The soft power of modern Israel is tradition, religion, art, but above all history. The memory of the Holocaust, one of the most dynamic areas of Polish-Israeli and Polish-Jewish dialogue, is particularly important for Israel.

Grażyna Michałowska pointed out that cultural values are dangerous when they undergo special manipulation of states, and this may result in increased tensions, negative stereotypes and social prejudices<sup>62</sup>. Over time, they can become more dangerous than official actions of states, also in the sphere of diplomacy. Especially when there is a discrepancy between officially created cultural policy and the actions of non-state actors, they can become a double-edged weapon of public diplomacy. The more that in democratic countries NGOs are standard actors of cultural and historical diplomacy. Władysław T. Bartoszewski, historian, co-founder of the Institute of Polish-Jewish Studies in Oxford, head of the Władysław Bartoszewski Chair in Collegium Civitas summed up the nearly 30-year achievements of Polish-Israeli cooperation, despite ongoing disputes between historians and publicists about common historical truth, assessing it as very good, even phenomenal, considering that interest in Israel in Poland is still growing and Israeli respond with the same interest and see Poland as “the best alliance in the European Union”<sup>63</sup>.

It should be remembered, however, that in the Polish-Israeli diplomatic narrative there are no easy solutions in the area of memory policy. According to Ambassador Anna Azari, it was the attempt to amend the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance that was the beginning of the deterioration of Polish-Israeli relations, and what happened later can be regarded as an inevitable consequence. The Israeli ambassador justifies the presence of strong emotions about the Holocaust as a matter of different narratives. At this point, one can refer to understood as “the process of problematization”, “the history of responses to a specific situation”, i.e. different narratives created by specific groups and the potential for differentiation associated with them. They result in, among others, silence, tabooing and stigmatization of certain phenomena<sup>64</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> G. Michałowska, *Wartości kulturalne w stosunkach międzynarodowych* [Cultural Values in International Relations], [in:] B. Mrozek, Stanisław Bieleń, D. Popławski, R. Zięba, W. Lizak, *Historia, polityka, stosunki międzynarodowe* [History, Politics, International Relations, Warszawa 1994, p. 119.

<sup>63</sup> M. Płociński in conversation with Władysław T. Bartoszewski, *Polska-Izrael: fenomenalny dorobek 29 lat* [Poland-Israel: A Phenomenal Achievement of 29 Years], „Rzeczpospolita” 26 Feb. 2019, <https://www.rp.pl/Dyplomacja/302269934-PolskaIzrael-fenomenalny-dorobek-29-lat.html> (17.03.2020).

<sup>64</sup> Michel Foucault raised these issues in his concept of ‘governmentality’. Quote after: M. Czyżewski, *Dyskursy tożsamościowe w nauce i życiu społecznym. Odmiany, własności, funkcje* [Identity Discourses in Science and Social Life. Variations, Properties, Functions] 2012, p. 102, [http://dSPACE.uni.lodz.pl/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11089/4201/Czyzewski%202012%20Dyskursy%20tozsamosciowe\\_druk.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://dSPACE.uni.lodz.pl/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11089/4201/Czyzewski%202012%20Dyskursy%20tozsamosciowe_druk.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) (17.03.2020).

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