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## POLISH ECONOMIC CIRCLES AND THE QUESTION OF THE COMMON EUROPEAN MARKET AFTER WORLD WAR I\*

### 1. Pan-Europe

During the period after World War I, after 123 years of division and foreign rule, Poland primarily focused on the reconstruction of the state as well as on uniting politically, economically and culturally the three parts it had been divided into. Poland, resurrected as the Second Republic, was at first a parliamentary democracy which from 1926 on increasingly exhibited authoritarian features. This process accelerated in 1935, after a new constitution had been passed and Marshal Józef Piłsudski had deceased.<sup>1</sup> The economic system underwent a similar change. Increasingly, the until then formally free market economy became the target of state intervention.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the tremendous efforts to tackle the national tasks, which after repeated economic crises resulted in economic nationalism,<sup>3</sup> people who intended to take things one step further – giving up the nation state in

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<sup>1</sup> Józef Piłsudski (1867–1935) was chief of state (1918–22), ‘first marshal’ (from 1920) and the authoritarian ruler of the Second Polish Republic (1926–35). From the middle of World War I onwards, he had a major influence on Poland’s politics and was an important figure on the European political scene.

<sup>2</sup> JAN KOFMAN, *Die nationale Wirtschaftspolitik der Zweiten Republik Polen* (1918 bis 1939), in: *Für eine nationale Wirtschaft. Ungarn, die Tschechoslowakei und Polen vom Ausgang des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*, ed. by ÁGNES POGANY/EDUARD KUBŮ/ JAN KOFMAN, Berlin 2006, p. 135-167, p. 135.

<sup>3</sup> For the question of economic nationalism in the Second Republic of Poland as well as for the whole region of East Central Europe, see KOFMAN, *Die nationale Wirtschaftspolitik*; HELGA SCHULZ, EDUARD KUBŮ, *History and Culture of Economic Nationalism in East Central Europe*, Berlin 2006.

favour of a Pan-European Union – can be found primarily in business and economic circles. The existence of these circles reveals a field of tension in Poland in those days between protectionist economic theorists and supranationally thinking politicians and idealists. Here we might risk the thesis that it was economic experts who were among the driving forces towards European integration also in Poland in the interwar period.<sup>4</sup> Regarding the question which direction economic policy should take, the Pan-European circles were in favour of boosting export and connecting Poland's economy more strongly with the world market, as well as of industrializing the country.

This article deals with the reception of the idea of a united Europe and a common market by Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894–1972)<sup>5</sup> in Poland. Of course, Coudenhove-Kalergi's idea of a united Europe is not the only vision of this kind that existed during the interwar period. French Prime and Foreign Minister Aristide Briand's Europe plan from 1929 must also be mentioned as a prominent example.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, Coudenhove-Kalergi's idea of Pan-Europe was one of the first plans for a united Europe and encompassed extensive ideas on economics, technology and infrastructure. Furthermore, it was a non-state initiative which in contrast to similar ideas was not only of an idealistic nature but also suggested pragmatic and, most importantly, economic-political solutions for a continent ravished by war. As one thesis states, it was these two aspects – being non-state and its professionalism regarding Pan-Europe's economic questions – that made it possible to transfer these ideas to Poland. For, in contrast to state actors,

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<sup>4</sup> Claudia Kraft concludes that the European and Polish efforts in support of the international standardization of regulations in the field of trade and business law after World War I show a strong will to integrate, despite the protectionist tendencies of those days. See CLAUDIA KRAFT, *Europa im Blick der polnischen Juristen. Rechtsordnung und juristische Profession in Polen im Spannungsfeld zwischen Nation und Europa 1918-1939*, Frankfurt am Main 2002, p. 63, 66, 322.

<sup>5</sup> On Pan-Europe and Coudenhove-Kalergi, see JÜRGEN ELVERT, *Die europäische Integration*, Darmstadt 2006, p. 29-30; RICHARD FROMMELT, *Panuropa oder Mitteleuropa. Einigungsbestrebungen im Kalkül deutscher Wirtschaft und Politik 1925-1933*, Stuttgart 1977, p. 11-16; VANESSA CONZE, *Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi. Umstrittener Visionär Europas*, Zürich 2004; OTTO VON HABSURG, *Die Paneuropäische Idee. Eine Vision und Wirklichkeit*, Wien 1999.

<sup>6</sup> See for example KAROL FIEDOR, *Niemieckie plany integracji Europy na tle doktryn zjednoczeniowych 1918–1945*, Wrocław 1991, p. 138-227; VANESSA CONZE, *Das Europa der Deutschen. Ideen von Europa und Deutschland zwischen Reichstradition und Westorientierung (1920-1970)*, München 2005; VANESSA CONZE, *Reich – Europa – Abendland. Zur Pluralität deutscher Europaideen im 20. Jahrhundert*, in: *Vorgänge. Zeitschrift für Bürgerrechte und Gesellschaftspolitik* 40 (2008), p. 60-69; GUIDO MÜLLER/ VANESSA CONZE, *Zwischen Rhein und Donau*, in: *Journal of European Integration History* 5 (1999), p. 17-47.

economists and entrepreneurs were active in the context of a 'scientific community' already before 1918.<sup>7</sup> The second, third and fourth Pan-European Congresses were almost exclusively dedicated to economic questions (1930 in Berlin, 1932 in Basel and 1935 in Vienna).<sup>8</sup>

Coudenhove-Kalergi considered Pan-Europe a 'political and economic alliance of all states, from Poland to Portugal, to form a confederation'.<sup>9</sup> He did not consider the Soviet Union and Great Britain to be parts of continental Europe, and they were excluded from the association. Coudenhove-Kalergi deemed Pan-Europe the only possibility to save Europe, to secure peace, to work against communism and to resist the U.S.A.'s economic imperialism. In this context, holding a European conference was seen as a first step towards the realization of the Pan-European concept. This was supposed to be followed by an obligatory arbitration and guarantee treaty and finally by the establishment of a European customs union.<sup>10</sup>

In 1923, Coudenhove-Kalergi founded the Pan-European Union by sending his book *Pan-Europe* to addressees around the world and seeking comrades-in-arms.<sup>11</sup> Only one month later, Coudenhove-Kalergi received more than one thousand applications by people who were ready to join the Pan-European Movement. The first Congress of the Pan-European Union was in Vienna three years later, in October 1926. Coudenhove-Kalergi's book sold more than sixteen thousand copies in 1926 alone and thus counted among the best-selling publications in those days. Coudenhove-Kalergi achieved a great success when Aristide Briand accepted the honor-

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<sup>7</sup> See KATRIN STEFFEN/ MARTIN KOHLRAUSCH, The limits and merits of internationalism. Experts, the state and the international community in Poland in the first half of the twentieth century, in: *European Review of History* 16/5 (2009), p. 715-737; MARTIN KOHLRAUSCH, Technologische Innovation und transnationale Netzwerke. Europa zwischen den Weltkriegen, in: *Journal of Modern European History* 6/2 (2008), p. 181-195; on the role of Polish chemists in the 'scientific community', see KATRIN STEFFEN, Wissenschaftler in Bewegung. Der Materialforscher Jan Czochralski zwischen den Weltkriegen, in: *Journal of Modern European History* 6/2 (2008), p. 237-261; on the role of Polish jurists, KRAFT, Europa im Blick, p. 13, 60.

<sup>8</sup> KRZYSZTOF RUCHNIEWICZ, Paneuropa hr. Richarda Coudenhove-Kalergiego a Polska, in: *Polska wobec idei integracji europejskiej w latach 1918-1945*, ed. by MIECZYSLAW WOJCIECHOWSKI, Toruń 2000, p. 45-63, p. 50.

<sup>9</sup> RICHARD NIKOLAUS COUDENHOVE-KALERGI, *Pan-Europa*, Wien 1923, p. 17 (author's translation).

<sup>10</sup> VERENA SCHÖBERL, 'Es gibt ein großes und herrliches Land, das sich selbst nicht kennt ... Es heißt Europa.' Die Diskussion um die Paneuropaidée in Deutschland, Frankreich und Großbritannien 1922-1933, Berlin 2008, p. 47.

<sup>11</sup> COUDENHOVE-KALERGI, *Pan-Europa*.

any presidency of the Union in 1927.<sup>12</sup> In 1928, the Pan-European Union had between six and eight thousand members across Europe.<sup>13</sup> However, there were hardly any members of governments among them. Most members belonged to the social, political and economic elites; they were writers, artists, public officials and politicians.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the clear interest of business circles in Pan-Europe should not be underestimated, which is reflected most of all in the movement's financial resources. At first, Coudenhove-Kalergi's private capital, proceeds from the sales of his books and the income of his wife, the actress Ida Roland (1881–1951), served as an essential financial basis. However, these funds alone were not sufficient and the movement depended on donations and support, most of which came from German business circles as well as from some European governments. The Hamburg financier Max Warburg donated sixty thousand gold marks a year in the first three years of the movement.<sup>15</sup> Among the German entrepreneurs financing Pan-Europe, Richard Heilner from the Deutsche Linoleumwerke and Robert Bosch were the most important. In 1930, Bosch established the Society for the Support of Pan-Europe (Pan-Europa Förderungsgesellschaft) in Zurich. Via this society, Pan-Europe also received donations from entrepreneurs such as Carl von Siemens and Adam Opel as well as from Hermann Bücher, Carl Duisberg and Wilhelm Kalle, from the Rütgerswerke Berlin and the Berliner Handelsgesellschaft. Moreover, bankers from Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank, Mendelssohnbank and Darmstädter Nationalbank supported the movement.<sup>16</sup> The Pan-European Union was also subsidized by the Austrian government as well as by the Baltic states, Romania, Czechoslovakia and France.<sup>17</sup>

Coudenhove-Kalergi's idea of Pan-Europe was of a temporary nature, being only the first step on the way towards a World Republic. Furthermore, the laicism of the united societies, an anti-state attitude, separating the nation from the state and, most of all, peace were fundamental features of this idea.<sup>18</sup> All supporters of this vision considered nationalism the main enemy of a united, confederate Europe, given the fact that precisely the

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<sup>12</sup> SCHÖBERL, *Die Diskussion um die Paneuropaidee*, p. 47, 52.

<sup>13</sup> ANITA ZIEGERHOFER-PRETTENHALER, *Botschafter Europas. Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi und die Paneuropa-Bewegung in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren*, Wien 2004, p. 104.

<sup>14</sup> SCHÖBERL, *Die Diskussion um die Paneuropaidee*, p. 52.

<sup>15</sup> JERZY CHODOROWSKI, *Osoba ludzka w doktrynie i praktyce europejskich wspólnot gospodarczych*, Poznań 1990, p. 111.

<sup>16</sup> SCHÖBERL, *Die Diskussion um die Paneuropaidee*, p. 55-56.

<sup>17</sup> ZIEGERHOFER-PRETTENHALER, *Botschafter Europas*, p. 114-115.

<sup>18</sup> CHODOROWSKI, *Osoba ludzka*, p. 104.

interwar period was a peak in the history of European and economic nationalism – and the Polish state was no exception.<sup>19</sup> Thus, in the reborn nation state of Poland, a tension developed between national interests and the intended European Union. The history of Pan-Europe in Poland shows this tension very clearly. The idea of Pan-Europe propagated a ‘United States of Europe’, which state agencies such as the Foreign Ministry considered to be the greatest threat to the newly achieved sovereignty. For the Polish state, which had border conflicts with almost all neighbouring countries, the revision of the Treaty of Versailles, including the questioning of borders which Coudenhove-Kalergi propagated, was a thorn in its side. Furthermore, the Pan-European Movement considered the interests of big economic organizations to be superior to those of small states, something which in Poland only a small group of experts was ready to do. Still today, some right-wing circles consider Polish supporters of the Pan-European Union to have been traitors of their country.<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, the idea of Pan-Europe was based on the ideology of universalism. Its supporters came from different social classes and were representatives of different religions. In Poland also, the supporters of the Pan-European idea were connected by their fascination for the different aspects of universalism, such as Jewish, Christian, socialist, Roman, Germanic or Freemason universalism.<sup>21</sup> Coudenhove-Kalergi was himself a high-ranking Freemason and member of the Viennese lodge Humanitas. This lodge was the first Austrian lodge to be founded in 1871 after the Austrian-Hungarian Compromise of 1867.<sup>22</sup> After an initiation ritual in December 1921, Coudenhove-Kalergi was finally accepted as a member of the Viennese lodge. As his reason for joining the lodge, he gave his origins, that is, his European, noble-born father and Japanese, bourgeois-born mother. Simply for this reason he considered himself a cosmopolitan ‘with the widest possible tolerance towards foreigners and everything foreign, without the slightest national or social prejudices’.<sup>23</sup> Due to first international criticism that labelled the Pan-European Movement as being of

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<sup>19</sup> STEFANIE ZLOCH, *Polnische Europa-Ideen und Europa-Pläne zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen*, in: *Europas Platz in Polen. Polnische Europa-Konzeptionen vom Mittelalter bis zum EU-Beitritt*, ed. by CLAUDIA KRAFT/ KATRIN STEFFEN, Osnabrück 2007, p. 157-180, p. 157.

<sup>20</sup> See HENRYK PAJAŁ, *Piąty rozbiór Polski*, Lublin 1998; PRZEMYSŁAW WAINGERTNER, ‘Kosmopolici’, ‘obcy agenci’, ‘zdrajcy’. Ze stereotypu wolnomularstwa w II Rzecz-pospolitej, in: *Ars Regia* 3/4 (1994), p. 97-110.

<sup>21</sup> CHODOROWSKI, *Osoba ludzka*, p. 35.

<sup>22</sup> ZIEGERHOFER-PRETTENHALER, *Botschafter Europas*, p. 50.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 51 (author’s translation).

Freemason nature, already in 1926 Coudenhove-Kalergi left the lodge in order to keep the Pan-European Movement neutral. He made his membership in the Freemason lodge public only in 1966 in his autobiography *A Life for Europe*.<sup>24</sup>

Coudenhove-Kalergi was most of all fascinated by Jewish universalism, which the growing anti-Semitic movement regarded as dangerous. In the eyes of some contemporary commentators in Poland, the Freemasons were identified as being Jewish, and as a consequence of anti-Semitic tendencies they were irrationally rejected even by intellectual circles.<sup>25</sup> As everywhere, the biggest target group of the Masonic movement in Poland was the middle class. However, the Polish middle class was quite weak at the time and many Freemasons were thus recruited from the assimilated Jewish bourgeoisie. Simply for this reason, many representatives of this class and religion were affiliated with the Polish Masonic movement. With the mood in Poland becoming increasingly anti-Jewish, the Freemasons also came under attack, most of all from the right-wing clerical milieu. In this context, different aspects were mixed up. On the one hand, these were internal social, economic and class conflicts. On the other, there was lacking or insufficient international support for the newly created state. This mixture of dissatisfaction and social conflict was the basis for the acts of violence against groups which in the eyes of some contemporaries represented the 'hated' social classes who were active at the international level – as was the case with most members of the Polish lodge.<sup>26</sup>

The Polish Freemason and delegate to the League of Nations, Szymon Askenazy (1866–1935), experienced this most strongly when dissatisfaction with the League of Nations' activities in Poland was vented on him and 'international Jewry'.<sup>27</sup> Askenazy became the target of anti-Semitic attacks primarily when the League of Nations did not support Poland during the Polish-Soviet War of 1919–20. Many Freemasons were confronted with the accusation of establishing too close a friendship with their 'brothers' from foreign countries, of being too open towards foreign influence, of introducing unrealistic, foreign concepts to the Polish mind and of offering standard answers to the country's unique social problems.<sup>28</sup> Another Polish Freema-

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 57.

<sup>25</sup> See LUDWIK HASS, *Wolnomularstwo w Polsce współczesnej*, in: *Zeszyty Historyczne* 118 (1996), p. 197-206, p. 205; PRZEMYSŁAW WAINGERTNER, *Wolnomularstwo II Rzeczypospolitej w oczach współczesnych*, Łódź 1999, especially chapter 5: 'Judeo-masoneria' – wolnomularstwo a Żydzi, p. 83-98.

<sup>26</sup> LEON CHAJN, *Polskie wolnomularstwo 1920-1938*, Warszawa 1984, p. 245.

<sup>27</sup> ZŁOCH, *Polnische Europa-Ideen*, p. 169.

<sup>28</sup> See CHAJN, *Polskie wolnomularstwo*, p. 156.

son and cellist, Bronisław Huberman (1882–1947), also felt the force of this anger when he became more and more committed to the Pan-European Movement. Huberman, the later founder of the Palestinian Symphony Orchestra, was very much committed to European unification. After his four-year stay in the U.S.A. (1921–25), Huberman promoted the United States of America as a model for the future of the European continent.<sup>29</sup>

The role of European Freemasons in the knowledge transfer and the strived-for integration process in Europe should not be underestimated. In the first half of the twentieth century, it was they who launched most initiatives to further Europe. Even the foundation of the League of Nations and its reforms were sometimes considered a Freemasons' initiative.<sup>30</sup> The foundation of the United States of Europe – Pan-Europe – also goes back to the European Masonic movement.<sup>31</sup> However, from the side of the Polish state, all these projects were received with great caution, if not scepticism. For example, only after a few months of its existence, many Polish politicians perceived the League of Nations as not being well-meaning towards Polish interests.<sup>32</sup> The reason for this scepticism was always the same: The Polish state was worried about loosing its newly attained sovereignty.

Coudenhove-Kalergi was fascinated by the rapid technological progress of the time, and he considered technology a function of united Europe, which was to be steadfast against any political or economic crisis.<sup>33</sup> Thus, the Movement supported Europe's integration mainly in the areas of technology, infrastructure and economy in order to facilitate increased contacts between the nations. But the development of many new nation states after World War I entailed the erection of new borders, which had a negative influence on communication and trade in Europe. On the European continent after World War I, the rapid technological progress and the expanded communication thus faced new, mostly political, barriers.

The supporters of the Pan-European Union wanted to counter this phenomenon through economic unification, 'because a Europe which is torn apart by artificial customs barriers must in the long run be able to compete with the planet's great economic areas, most of all North Ame-

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<sup>29</sup> ANDRZEJ BORZYM/ JEREMI SADOWSKI, *Polscy Ojcowie Europy*, Warszawa 2004, p. 84; see also BRONISŁAW HUBERMAN, *Mein Weg zu Paneuropa*, Wien 1925 as well as BRONISŁAW HUBERMAN, *Vaterland Europa*, Berlin 1932.

<sup>30</sup> See: *Die Freimaurerei und der Völkerbund*, in: *Die Friedens-Warte. Journal of international peace and organization* 22 (1920), p. 244–245.

<sup>31</sup> CHODOROWSKI, *Osoba ludzka*, p. 80.

<sup>32</sup> ZŁOCH, *Polnische Europa-Ideen*, p. 169.

<sup>33</sup> RICHARD NIKOLAUS COUDENHOVE-KALERGI, *Apologie der Technik*, Leipzig 1922, p. 23.



rica'.<sup>34</sup> Thus in Poland, apart from the intellectuals, the supporters of the idea of a united Europe were mostly those business and economic circles for which every obstacle to free trade and the flow of goods, capital and human beings was disadvantageous. Until now, the literature cites most of all intellectuals, aristocrats, left-wing activists and students as supporters of the Pan-European Union in Poland.<sup>35</sup> However, it rarely takes into account the connection between Pan-Europe and those Freemason and business circles from which the experts were recruited as well as the networks they used for communication within Europe. However, particularly for the Poles, being members of a nation without a state of its own for a long time, non-state actors and the development of an 'international society' of scientists, economists and entrepreneurs were the foundation of European thought.<sup>36</sup>

## 2. Economic Circles

In view of the above, economic and scholarly circles as well as the Freemasons counted among the greatest supporters of the comparatively small section of the Pan-European Union in Poland. The connection to business was also very important for Pan-Europe's international communication. This networking already becomes apparent in the person of the chairman of the Polish section of the Pan-European Union. Aleksander Lednicki (1866–1934), a lawyer and since March 1917 chairman of the liquidation commission of the Polish Congress at the Russian provisional government, became the leading figure of the Pan-European Movement in Poland and was a member first of the Moscow lodge and later of the Great National Lodge of Poland (*Wielka Loża Narodowa Polski* – WLN).<sup>37</sup> As a lawyer, he represented many big foreign investors in Poland. Among other things he was the founder and chief executive of the Lloyd Poland Public Limited Company, chairman of the American Bank in Poland and strongly involved in the take-over of the textile manufactures in Żyrardów by a French syndi-

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<sup>34</sup> RICHARD NIKOLAUS COUDENHOVE-KALERGI, *Kampf um Paneuropa*, 3 vols, Wien 1928, p. 5 (author's translation).

<sup>35</sup> See for example WŁODZIMIERZ BORODZIEJ/ BŁAŻEJ BRZOSTEK/ MACIEJ GÓRNY, *Polskie Europa-Pläne des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Option Europa. Deutsche, polnische und ungarische Europapläne des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by WŁODZIMIERZ BORODZIEJ et al., vol. 1, Göttingen 2005, p. 43-134, p. 95.

<sup>36</sup> KRAFT, *Europa im Blick*, p. 10.

<sup>37</sup> See LUDWIK HASS, *Masoneria Polska w XX wieku. Losy, loże, ludzie*, Warszawa 1996, p. 209.



cate.<sup>38</sup> A second example of the extended networking among supporters of Pan-Europe, Freemasons and Polish business circles is another member of Pan-Europe's Polish section, Hipolit Gliwic (1878–1943). This economist and mining engineer launched his career in St Petersburg, where he worked as a lecturer at the mining institute for many years. There he became a member of the St Petersburg lodge. In the years 1919–25, he worked as a diplomat in Washington, D. C. Then he held the position of a director at the Polish Ministry of Industry and Trade. Very often he took part in meetings of the League of Nations. But most of all he played a very important role in Polish business. He held a number of board positions, among others at the United Iron and Steel Works and Mines Modrzejów-Handtke, at the Commerce Bank and in the Association of Mining-Iron and Steel Works Interests.<sup>39</sup>

Polish business circles considered Pan-Europe an economic organism in the context of a customs union. They demanded the abandoning of passports and visas within Europe and the standardization of railroad tariffs in order to relieve the economy and defend against economic crises. One aspect of this way of thinking in Western Europe was the attempt to integrate the individual economic branches, such as the development of the steel cartel in 1926.<sup>40</sup> During the interwar period, many international cartels had developed. Besides the iron and steel cartel, there were cartels for coal, chemicals and timber. The cartels could adopt different measures for controlling prices, production or sales. Sometimes only export was controlled. The cartel directors often argued that they acted not only to the benefit of their members, but also to the benefit of society as a whole. This is an argumentation which is mostly connected to state authorities and the situation indicates an interesting tension between the state and the cartel: Who decides what is in the interest of society?<sup>41</sup> There also existed a similar tension between the supporters of Pan-Europe and the Polish state. Those economists and entrepreneurs who adhered to the Pan-European Movement supported the growing networking among inner-European industrial branches. This kind of European rationalization was supposed to

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<sup>38</sup> JAN TOMBIŃSKI, *Początki ruchu paneuropejskiego w Polsce*, in: *Z dziejów prób integracji europejskiej od średniowiecza do współczesności*, ed. by MICHAŁ PUŁASKI, Kraków 1995, p. 83–93, p. 85.

<sup>39</sup> See CHAJN, *Polskie wolnomularstwo*, p. 154.

<sup>40</sup> See CLEMENS A. WURM, *Business, Politics and International Relations. Steel, Cotton and International Cartels in British Politics, 1924–1939*, Cambridge 1993.

<sup>41</sup> See BIRGIT KARLSSON, *Industrial Cartels and Monopolies in Sweden before 1950. Towards a regulated market. Wood, steel and iron 1919–1939*. Paper for the World Economic History Congress 2009 Utrecht, p. 2: <http://www.wehc2009.org/programme.asp?find=Karlsson>, accessed 16 August 2009.

pave the way towards the gradual horizontal and vertical reduction of inner-European customs.<sup>42</sup>

On the other hand, the Polish state, whose national economy was to a great extent based on agriculture and which was only beginning to build up an industry of its own, was afraid that abandoning the customs barriers might damage this process. Only the improvement of the economic situation would help the idea of a common market take hold in Poland. After trade contracts with France and Great Britain had been signed on 6 February 1922 and 26 November 1923, and a change in U.S. foreign policy after 1924 led to an increased flow of loans and investments into Poland for the first time, cooperation within Europe was perceived more positively.<sup>43</sup> However, the economists were not the only supporters of Pan-Europe in Poland. One great friend of this idea was the already mentioned Bronisław Huberman. He also considered higher wages, lower prices, free competition and thus a higher quality of products and welfare, as well as a higher living standard to be beneficial effects of the Pan-European Movement.<sup>44</sup>

More than two thousand people from twenty-four countries attended the first Pan-European Congress held in Vienna in 1926. Poland was represented by Aleksander Lednicki. Among the numerous members of the Polish delegation there were also the Socialist Władysław Landau, who represented the Polish youth, Zygmunt Kaczyński, a priest and member of the Sejm for the Christian-National Party, Marian Dąbrowski, member of the People's Party 'Piast' (PSL 'Piast') and at the same time chief editor of the Krakow newspaper *Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny*, as well as Bronisław Huberman. The Polish delegation was above all concerned with the issue of customs duties. It maintained that abandoning the customs barriers would be impossible as long as the border issues had not been resolved and there was still danger of being attacked by a foreign state. Here, the Poles primarily had Germany in mind, but also Russia. Furthermore, the Polish delegation expressed its support for the founding of a professional international committee of experts which was supposed to deal with the specific problems of European integration. Marian Dąbrowski, Tadeusz Dzieduszycki, Feliks Bocheński, Henryk Schoenefeld, Feliks Gross and Władysław Landau moreover contributed to the work of the commission for intellectual cooperation.<sup>45</sup> The reaction of the Polish press to the congress was at first well-meaning and confident. First and foremost, the newspaper *Głos*

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<sup>42</sup> COUDENHOVE-KALERGI, *Kampf um Paneuropa*, p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> RUCHNIEWICZ, *Paneuropa*, p. 55.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

*Prawdy* from Piłsudski's camp reported extensively from the congress.<sup>46</sup> It is characteristic that among the three main political tendencies (nationalist-conservative, people's, and socialist) that had established themselves in Poland since the end of the 1870s,<sup>47</sup> it was the socialists who were most interested in the idea of a Pan-Europe.<sup>48</sup> (Again, this must be traced back to socialist universalism.) The movement seemed to offer the best possibility to reconcile Polish interests with the European idea. The Polish observer of the congress, Tadeusz Dzieduszycki, stated that the evolution towards a new Europe had to go hand in hand with the evolution towards a new Poland.<sup>49</sup> Even Piłsudski is said to have sent Lednicki to Vienna.

The timing of this congress is very important for the question whether or not the head of state agreed with the Pan-European idea as well as the question concerning his relationship towards the Freemasons. Piłsudski's position towards the Freemasons and towards the Pan-European Union – similar to his domestic and foreign policies – was subject to a breathtaking evolution from one end of the spectrum to the other.<sup>50</sup> It is generally accepted that in the early days of the Polish state, particularly between 1919 and 1921, Piłsudski tried to use these circles in the fight for the future borders of the state, which explains his great sympathy for the Masonic movement. In this context, he counted on the Freemasons' great influence at the Paris Peace Conference and generally at the international level. Similarly, he used these connections before and after his military coup in May 1926, that is before he was reelected as head of state by the Sejm, as a way of legitimizing this non-democratic takeover of power on the international stage. He moreover needed the support of influential politicians, and indeed many Freemasons were members of his later government. Apart from Prime Minister Kazimierz Bartel, August Zaleski, Hipolit Gliwic, Wacław Makowski, Witold Staniewicz and Stanisław Jurkiewicz were recruited from these circles. The change in the marshal's politics towards authoritative rule, most of all in the years 1929–30, went hand in hand with a change in his position towards the Freemasons, which turned into nothing short of open confrontation.<sup>51</sup>

After the foundation of the Pan-European Union's first Austrian section with its seat in Vienna, similar sections were founded in Czechoslovakia,

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>47</sup> BORODZIEJ/ BRZOSTEK/ GÓRNY, *Polnische Europa-Pläne*, p. 74.

<sup>48</sup> TOMBIŃSKI, *Początki ruchu paneuropejskiego*, p. 84.

<sup>49</sup> Quoted in ZŁOCH, *Polnische Europa-Ideen*, p. 171.

<sup>50</sup> See LEON CHAJN, *Wolnomularstwo w II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 1975, p. 414.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 421.

France, Germany and Great Britain. Despite initial difficulties in the founding of a similar section in Poland, in Warsaw an organizational committee of the Pan-European Union was also established on 2 February 1927. Aleksander Lednicki became its chairman. Further members were Senator Józef Buzek, deputy marshal of the Sejm, Hipolit Gliwic, former Senator Witold Kamieniecki, Senator Stanisław Posner, Count Wojciech Rostkowski, Colonel Walery Sławek, Dr Mieczysław Szawlewski and Minister Józef Targowski. Also, many representatives of the political left were members of this section, such as the Socialist Mieczysław Niedziałkowski, representatives of the Peasants' Party such as Stanisław Thugutt for PSL 'Wyzwolenie', who at the same time was the chief editor of the magazine *Tydzień*, and Marian Dąbrowski for PSL 'Piast'. Bronisław Huberman was present as a non-member of a political party. Representatives of the moderate right wing, such as Zygmunt Kaczyński as well as members of the Polish diplomatic service such as former Minister of Foreign Affairs Aleksander Skrzyński, were also among the members of the movement.<sup>52</sup>

### 3. Freemasons

As we have seen, in the time of its existence the Polish Pan-Europe section encompassed prominent members of different political orientations. Apart from economic or social interest groups, many members of Freemasons' lodges were active in the Polish section of Pan-Europe. Similar to Pan-Europe, the Freemasons as an organization connected representatives of the intellectual, political and business elites.<sup>53</sup> Still today, the question of the Freemasons' influence on Poland's domestic and foreign policy and thus on the activities of the Polish section of Pan-Europe in the interwar period is heatedly debated by right-wing politicians and populists. It is very difficult to resolve this question because the Polish Freemasons were never legalized. On the other hand, however, they were not explicitly banned until autumn 1938 either.<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, they led a semi-public life without the status of a legal entity and without being entitled to property or the right to actively publish.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, in comparison to other countries, the Freemasons in Poland were very weak in numbers. According to the world

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<sup>52</sup> ZLOCH, *Polnische Europa-Ideen*, p. 172.

<sup>53</sup> WAINERTNER, *Wolnomularstwo*, p. 2.

<sup>54</sup> On 22 September 1938, the Polish president, Ignacy Mościcki, announced a decree on the dissolution of the associations of Freemasons in Poland.

<sup>55</sup> WAINERTNER, *Wolnomularstwo*, p. 12.

press of the Masonic movement, there was just one Freemason per one hundred thousand inhabitants and one lodge per three million Poles.<sup>56</sup>

However, if we compare the rather small number of supporters of the Masonic movement in Poland at that time (the number of members at no time exceeded four hundred)<sup>57</sup> to the comparably large number of Freemasons among the members of Pan-Europe's Polish section, there is some reason to assume a dense personal network between the two organizations. Although the Polish Freemasons were a comparatively small group, some right-wing politicians of the time attributed great influence to them – not only regarding Pan-Europe, but also Poland's domestic and foreign policy. Leon Chajn identifies several arguments that were used to serve as 'objective reasons' to corroborate these claims, the most important being the delayed development of Polish capitalism, the insufficient development of the Polish middle class and the usually overestimated influence of the allegedly dangerous Jewish bourgeoisie. Furthermore, compared to other countries, the Polish lodges were very elitist. Polish Freemasons demanded a very high degree of professional qualification from their candidates, and indeed their members occupied most of the top positions in business and at state institutions. Thus, often Polish candidates found it easier to become members of foreign lodges than of a Polish one. However, the most important reason why some perceived these circles to have great influence on the fate of Poland seems to be the Freemasons' high degree of secrecy and discretion. Still today, it is very difficult to clearly identify individual members.<sup>58</sup> This secrecy facilitated the development of countless myths and prejudices against Polish Freemasons and thus indirectly also against the Pan-European Movement.

However, Pan-Europe was never a Freemasons' organization. Similar to the case of the Polish Rotary Club, the fact that many representatives of the Polish section of Pan-Europe were members of the Masonic movement resulted in Pan-Europe being considered a representative body and basis of staff recruitment for the Freemasons, and vice versa.<sup>59</sup> A very active supporter of the idea of Pan-Europe in Poland, the economist, politician and Minister Hipolit Gliwic, was at the same time a very active Freemason. At two congresses of the International Association of Freemasons (*Association Maçonnique Internationale* – AMI) in Luxembourg in 1934 and in Prague

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<sup>56</sup> At that time, in Czechoslovakia there were 22 Freemasons per 10,000 inhabitants, in Bulgaria 11, in Yugoslavia 8, in Germany and France 120, in Great Britain 990 and in the U.S.A. 2,600. See CHAJN, *Polskie wolnomularstwo*, p. 245.

<sup>57</sup> WAINGERTNER, *Wolnomularstwo*, p. 13.

<sup>58</sup> CHAJN, *Polskie wolnomularstwo*, p. 245, 254, 259.

<sup>59</sup> WAINGERTNER, *Wolnomularstwo*, p. 18.

in 1936, he represented the Polish lodge and in 1936 became the representative of the Polish Masonic movement at the federation of Freemason authors and publishers (Philateles Society). Marian Dąbrowski, the independence activist, author on military affairs and husband of the writer Maria Dąbrowska, was hence not the only 'prominent' Freemason involved in the Pan-European Movement. Among them were also the Socialist Stanisław Posner and Walery Sławek, the founder of the block of non-party members which supported the government of Józef Piłsudski (*Bezpartyjny Blok Współpracy z Rządem* – BBWR) and Polish prime minister for three terms of office in the 1930s.<sup>60</sup>

On the other hand, among the supporters of Pan-Europe were also figures of public life who did not show a kindly attitude towards the Freemasons, but still maintained close contacts with their representatives. Prominent among them was Zygmunt Kaczyński (1894–1953), who became chief of the editorial staff of the Catholic press agency in Poland after 1930. From 1933 onwards he was the representative of the Polish Episcopate on Freemason affairs.

#### 4. The Professional Network

The professional group biggest in numbers among the Polish Freemasons was scientists, followed by public officials and – in the early period – members of the armed forces. Many Polish Freemasons were jurists, physicians, engineers, bankers and entrepreneurs.<sup>61</sup> The professional structure of the Polish section of Pan-Europe was similar.

Władysław Landau (1901–33) was a public official at the Treasury and the director of the scientific department of the Institute of Social Economy (*Instytut Gospodarstwa Społecznego*). Apart from numerous writings on the problems of the working class, he attained fame as the initiator and member of the editorial staff of the *Diary of the Unemployed*.<sup>62</sup> Feliks Bocheński also wrote about economic questions and after World War II worked for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.<sup>63</sup> Józef Buzek (1873–1936) resembled the other members of the Pan-Euro-

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 37–39.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>62</sup> See WŁADYSŁAW LANDAU, Ośmiogodzinny dzień pracy, in: Sprawy Robotnicze, no. 1, Warszawa 1927; WŁADYSŁAW LANDAU, Pamiętniki bezrobotnych, no. 1–57, Warszawa 1933.

<sup>63</sup> FELIKS BOCHEŃSKI, The economic structure of Poland, Birkenhead 1944; Foreign trade in Poland, ed. by FELIKS BOCHEŃSKI, London 1946.

pean section in Poland – he was a lawyer and an economist as well as a well-known statistician. He was the first director of the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS) from 1918 to 1929 and a member of a constitutional commission during his parliamentary work in the Sejm and Senate.

Tadeusz Dzieduszycki (1896–1976) supported the thesis of the necessity to increase the efficiency of the Polish economic system and is the best-known Polish representative of the utopia of technocracy.<sup>64</sup> He was deeply convinced that Poland's future would be decided at the economic level. According to Dzieduszycki, the social problems could only be solved by means of comprehensive scientific analysis and a common programme contrived by experts from different disciplines. For him, the professional network of Pan-Europe was such a platform. Another member of the scientific staff was Henryk Schoenefeld (1885–1951), a chemist and one of the outstanding authorities in the field of fat and oil technology.<sup>65</sup> After obtaining his Ph.D. from Zurich University, he worked in the fat and oil industry but, like many other members of the Pan-European Movement in Poland, he also continued work as a scientist and was engaged in research at the Department of Industrial Chemistry at the University of Liverpool. Thus, working and researching abroad was another important feature that characterized the Polish members of the Pan-European Movement.

Feliks Gross (1906–2006) graduated as a lawyer from Jagiellonian University in Krakow and became a lecturer there. Before the outbreak of World War II, he founded the School of Social Sciences (*Szkoła Nauk Społecznych*) in Krakow. He was a social and political activist, a committed and energetic labour lawyer, and a member of the prewar Polish Socialist Party (*Polska Partia Socjaldemokratyczna*). He held several positions at the League of Nations and the London School of Economics. During the war he fled to the United States, where he became a member of the Eastern European Planning Board. He continued his work as a scholar and lectured at New York University, the University of Wyoming and the University of Virginia as well as at the Universities of Florence, Paris, Rome and the College of Europe. Gross's Pan-European universalism was reflected not only in his biography as a Jewish, Polish and American sociologist, but also in his writing. He saw the U.S.A. as a model for Europe – a multiethnic state founded upon the principles of democracy. Gross's more than

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<sup>64</sup> See WŁODZIMIERZ MICH, Tadeusza Dzieduszyckiego utopia technokratyczna, in: *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska*, Sectio K, vol. IV (1997), p. 59-65, as well as Stefan Rohdewald's contribution to this volume.

<sup>65</sup> See *Journal of the American Oil Chemists' Society* 28/10 (1951), p. 25.



twenty books and numerous articles address the possibility of different peoples and ethnic groups living in peace.<sup>66</sup>

The personal contacts between these scholars, within economic circles and among Freemasons were crucial for spreading the idea of Pan-Europe. The first Polish concept of the United States of Europe by Stefan Buszczyński goes back to this network. His study *La Décadence de l'Europe* was published in Paris as early as 1867, hence much earlier than Coudenhove-Kalergi's concept.<sup>67</sup> Inspired by the Freemasons, he envisioned a red cross in the sun surrounded by a ring as a coat of arms for Europe. Later, Coudenhove-Kalergi chose that same coat of arms for his Pan-European Movement. Furthermore, the members of the Polish section of Pan-Europe can be considered experts. Many of them held important positions in Poland's economy and at an early stage expressed their own ideas regarding European integration. Józef Buzek presented the concept for a federation they had developed as early as May 1919. He suggested the foundation of seventy federal states in Europe, each one with a number of inhabitants ranging from two hundred to five hundred thousand and with their own constitutions.<sup>68</sup>

## 5. Stranding

It was always problematic for the Pan-European Movement in Poland because those who supported the idea were too closely identified with Poland's powerful neighbours, Germany and Russia. When Coudenhove-Kalergi geared up efforts to gain the favour of German politics and even demanded to hand the 'corridor' over to Germany, this could no longer be compatible with Polish interests. Poland considered the German efforts to overcome the regulations of the Treaty of Versailles a striving for hegemony and a threat to its sovereignty.<sup>69</sup> This was the reason why already at the end of the 1920s the commitment of the Polish section of Pan-Europe waned. With increasing frequency, the Polish Foreign Ministry intervened

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<sup>66</sup> See for example FELIKS GROSS, *Citizenship and Ethnicity. The Growth and Development of a Democratic Multiethnic Institution*, Westport 1999.

<sup>67</sup> STEFAN BUSZCZYŃSKI, *La Décadence de l'Europe*, Paris 1867.

<sup>68</sup> BORODZIEJ/ BRZOSTEK/ GÓRNY, *Polnische Europa-Pläne*, p. 88.

<sup>69</sup> See HANS LEMBERG, *Mitteuropa und Osteuropa. Politische Konzeptionen im Spiegel der Historikerdiskussion der Zwischenkriegszeit*, and JAN KŘEN, *Das Integrationsproblem in Ostmitteleuropa zwischen den beiden Kriegen*, in: *Mitteuropa-Konzeptionen in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by RICHARD G. PLASCHKA et al., Wien 1995, p. 213-220 and p. 151-164; JÜRGEN ELVERT, *Mitteuropa! Deutsche Pläne zur europäischen Neuordnung (1918-1945)*, Stuttgart 1999, p. 111-166.

in the work of the section and urged its members to be careful and alert towards Coudenhove-Kalergi. Thus, the Polish supporters of the Pan-European Union tried to draw the attention of the Polish government even more directly to the economic questions this movement addressed. Accordingly, Jan Gawroński – the Polish ambassador in Vienna from 1933 to 1938 – argued that despite the conflict over political issues, the work of Pan-Europe might be economically profitable for Poland. He reckoned that incorporating independent economists from Poland would help the Polish economy without the danger of affecting the authority of the Polish government.<sup>70</sup> At this time, however, the Foreign Ministry's scepticism towards the Pan-European Movement had already grown to such a degree that the Pan-European Union's two congresses on economy in December 1933 and May 1934 were held without Polish participation.

Also, the controversies surrounding Aleksander Lednicki, the chairman of the Polish section of the Pan-European Union, who was regarded as being too close to the Russians, were not without influence on the Polish commitment to Pan-Europe.<sup>71</sup> His death in 1934 put an end to Poland's contribution to the Pan-European Movement. Lednicki committed suicide when – this time in the context of the Polish-French quarrel over economic issues and under the pressure of the ongoing economic crisis – he was repeatedly accused of being involved in the so-called Żyrardów affair,<sup>72</sup> and thus of serving foreign interests.<sup>73</sup>

## 6. Conclusion

I hope to have shown that despite Poland's nationally oriented economic policy during the interwar period, supporters of European economic integration can also be found. Especially Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-European idea fell on fertile ground in interwar Poland. The supporters of this idea

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<sup>70</sup> TOMBIŃSKI, *Początki ruchu paneuropejskiego*, p. 91.

<sup>71</sup> ZŁOCH, *Polnische Europa-Ideen*, p. 172.

<sup>72</sup> At the beginning of the Second Republic, the textile works in Żyrardów near Warsaw were under state administration. After the reconstruction phase, this industrial location developed well economically. After a French consortium, in which Lednicki was involved, took over the Żyrardów works in 1923, however, problems began to arise. The ensuing cutbacks in production and subsequently unemployment were in part due to the general economic crisis. But state control agencies also uncovered numerous flaws in the management of the plants (the Żyrardów affair) and in 1936 the works again came under the control of the State Agricultural Bank.

<sup>73</sup> See ZYGMUNT WASILEWSKI, *Proces Lednickiego. Fragment z dziejów odbudowy Polski 1915–1942*, Warszawa 1924.

primarily came from economic circles, many of them were public officials and scholars, and the Freemasons played an important role in this movement. They often used non-state communication channels which were mostly based on aristocratic and lodge connections as well as on contacts between business people and scholars. For this reason, the manifestation of the movement in Poland must be considered a very elitist expert phenomenon.

For the representatives of Pan-Europe, a united Europe without any barriers to the free flow of goods, capital and human beings was the main goal. Furthermore, universalism as an ideology was an integral part of the movement. Therefore, economic and scholarly circles as well as Freemasons counted among the greatest supporters of the comparatively small section of the Pan-European Union in Poland. Professionalism, political differentiation and transnationalism, especially in working and researching abroad, were further important features of this network.

Nationalism was the main enemy for the supporters of the Pan-European Movement and this transnational network had to compete with increasing nationalism also in Poland. Thus, the state was clearly an obstacle with respect to the establishment of a common European market after World War I. Indeed, the Polish Foreign Ministry was very much interested in this movement, but did not consider it to be of any serious significance for Polish interests. The Pan-European Movement even became problematic for the Polish state since the idea of a united Europe was too strongly identified with Poland's powerful neighbours, Germany and Russia. This was the reason why as early as in the late 1920s, the commitment of the Polish section of Pan-Europe became less intensive. The time for a European economic union had simply not yet come, and the Polish elites were too concerned with Poland's internal and external problems and thus reluctant towards any ideas of integration.