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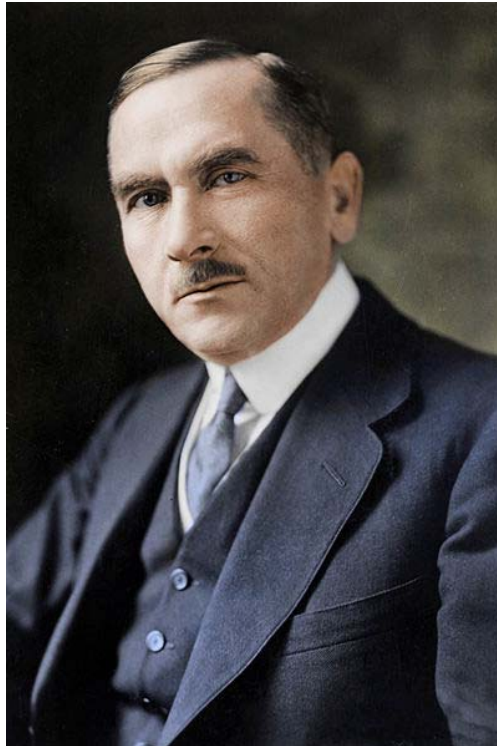
# 社会主义 体制史研究

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**Roman Dmowski on relations with Russia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and in the interwar period. "Historia magistra vitae est" - what could be learned from that history lesson?**

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**cover photo** Roman Dmowski in color (Erstellt: 1. Januar 1919)

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Statue of Dmowski in Warsaw



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Roman Dmowski: signature

A handwritten signature of Roman Dmowski in cursive script. The signature is written in black ink and is highly stylized, with long, flowing lines.

(出所) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman\\_Dmowski#/media/File:Roman\\_Dmowski\\_signature.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Dmowski#/media/File:Roman_Dmowski_signature.svg) (Public Domain)

## **Roman Dmowski on relations with Russia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and in the interwar period. "Historia magistra vitae est" - what could be learned from that history lesson?**

**Benon Gaziński<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

The objective of that Paper is to overview a heritage of Roman Dmowski, one of the key Polish politicians of the turn of 19-th/20-th century. As Poland did not exist on political maps, Polish leaders, striving for the independence, followed the two options: looking for some support from Germany or from Russia. Charismatic Józef Piłsudski representing the first option, played overwhelming role in reconstitution of the Polish state. And Roman Dmowski, after 1918, lived somewhat in shadow of the politic mainstream. The open question remains: could the Polish-Russian relations develop following the second option, based on a dialogue? Could more conciliatory politics be possible to avoid an open conflict of Bolshevich-Polish war? Those years in Poland, a dispute between supporters of the state intervention in the national economy and those representing more liberal approach took place. Therefore, liberal ideas of Roman Dmowski deserve to be reviewed. Another interesting point, to be dealt with, is Dmowski' nationalistic attitudes and his patronage to „Młodzież Wszechpolska” [“All-Polish Youth”] movement. Such an insight could contribute to a debate on contemporary political disturbances in Poland and other countries of the region.

**Key words:** Dmowski, Piłsudski, Polish Russian/Soviet relations

### ***Introduction***

Events related to the First World War significantly changed the political map of Europe. The breakdown of the three partitioning powers: tsarist Russia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and imperial Prussia brought, in November 1918, Poland's independence. The century which has already passed is conducive - according to the maxim "historia magistra vitae est" - to reflection on the experience of the past, for a better understanding of Polish-Russian relations, often turbulent in the history of the neighbouring communities.

Roman Dmowski is one of those politicians who occupy an outstanding place in rebirth of the Polish state after 123-years of the partitions. The inspiration for the elaboration of this work were Dmowski's views on economic issues, as he carefully addressed them in the first years of the new Polish reality. There was a significant dispute between “etatists” [“état” – state in French] who were in favour of a large share of the state in the economy and supporters of market regulations, including Dmowski. The flagship achievements of the interwar Poland were the construction of a modern seaport in Gdynia, with which a fishing village of 1,000 and several hundred rural dweller transformed into a modern city of over a hundred thousand inhabitants and the construction of the Central Industrial District [the COP], the completion of which was interrupted by the outbreak of another war - both investments were significantly supported by the state. However, while comparing the level of socioeconomic development before 1914 and in 1939, it remains as an open question whether supporters of the market option were not in a right side of the quarrel.

During the 1919-1939 period, Roman Dmowski stood on the sidelines of the political mainstream - overwhelmed by Marshal Piłsudski and his political camp, being in power until the fall of the state in

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1939. The years of real socialism were those in which the Second Republic of Poland was generally depicted in a distorting mirror. After 1989, a year of the democratic breakthrough, the situation changed radically. However, one case has not changed - Piłsudski's achievements overshadow Dmowski's political work. Streets of Piłsudski could be found in almost every major city (it is one of the main city streets in Olsztyn). Places commemorating Dmowski are much more difficult to find. Even worse - the political tradition of Dmowski's thoughts is referred to by adventurous nationalist circles, developing especially in the younger generation and tolerated by the government of Law and Justice (the PiS), which have taken power in Poland since Autumn 2015.

This research work is based on extensive literature survey and, in particular, excerpts from Roman Dmowski's different political essays, written in Polish and translated by the author.

## **1. Dmowski – his life devoted to politics. The biographical outline**

Roman Dmowski was born (in 1864) in a paver family in Kamionek (nowadays: Warsaw), in those time a part of Russian Tsar empire. He died in Drozdowo close to Łomża, in independent Poland, in 2-nd January 1939. He began his education at the Warsaw high school in 1875 and, at the age of 17, he founded a secret youth organization the "Strażnica" ("Watchtower"), aimed at resisting Russification. Then he becomes a member of the organization "Zet", gathering patriotic youth. He continued his political activity in the "Polish League", operating both in Poland under the partitions and in exile. At that time, he began working with the weekly "Głos" [the "Voice"]. In 1891, he was one of the organizers of the great demonstration in Warsaw on the 100-th anniversary of the Constitution of May 3.

He obtained the degree of a candidate of natural sciences at the Imperial University of Warsaw in 1891 and went to Paris to continue his studies. Coming back, in 1892, he was arrested at the border and put to the Warsaw "Citadel" prison for investigation. Released, in April 1893, he made a coup with his comrades, transforming the "Polish League" into the "National League", of which he became the leader.

After the announcement of the five-year ban on staying in the Russian partition, he was sent to Mitawa (currently: Jelgawa in Latvia). He left Russia illegally in 1895 and went to Lvov. He published in the "Przegląd Emigracyjny" ["Emigration Review"] and then transformed it into the "Przegląd Wszepolski" ["All-Poland Review"], becoming its Editor-in-chief. He published there many of his essays in which he described his political programme - the development of a national movement aimed at regaining independence and encompassing the whole of society. After traveling abroad, among others to France, England and Brazil, he settled in Cracow, where he also moved the editorial staff of "Przegląd Wszepolski".

During the Russian-Japanese war, in 1904, he visited Japan to convince the authorities that the support of a possible Polish anti-Russian uprising is harmful to both nations. He then formulated a programme for the autonomy - under the Russian rulership - of the Kingdom of Poland.

As a result of political changes related to the 1905 revolt, in February 1907, he became a deputy of the Second Duma and Chairman of its Polish Group.

Already in his earlier writings, he predicted the outbreak of the war on a European scale, advocating - as a resolute opponent of Germany, and thus also an ally of the coalition - for agreement with Russia.

During the 1-st World War, aiming to internationalize the Polish question, he left for the West. He became the President of the Polish National Committee established in Lausanne (but based in Paris), recognized by the Entente states as a diplomatic representation of the reborn Polish state. He

represented Poland, together with Ignacy Paderewski, at the Peaceful Conference in Paris - both signed the Versailles Treaty<sup>2</sup>.

He returned to Poland in May 1920. During the Polish-Bolshevik war, he joined the Council of State Defense, from which he resigned as a result of a conflict with Marshal Piłsudski, leaving for Poznań and later to his, acquired nearby, property Chłudowo.

He did not establish a family, devoting himself entirely to public work. Very active as a political writer, he became the undisputed leader of the National Democracy camp, represented in the Sejm by the People's National Union. In December 1926, as a response to the May coup of Piłsudski, he set up the Great Poland Camp, a few years later outlawed by the authorities. As an opponent of Piłsudski, he was also discriminated after his death by the Sanation regime because, as one of his close associates observed, there was no official delegation of the authorities at his funeral. He died not witnessing the defeat of the Polish state, which he co-founded. His funeral gathered countless crowds, about one hundred thousand<sup>3</sup>, coming from all over Poland<sup>4</sup>.

Piłsudski and Dmowski were personalities of a completely different kind. Their targets were the same - regaining independence by Poland and strengthening and consolidation of the reborn state - but the tools to be applied to reach it were completely different. The dispute between them emerged in 1904 and lasted properly until 1935, that is a year of the death of the Marshal.

Piłsudski was overbearing. In one of his letters, from 1891, he openly admitted: "I was brought up in such a way that my faith in my abilities was instilled in me, and hence my extraordinary destiny." From the very youth he was therefore convinced of his greatness. Personal qualities undoubtedly predestined him for exercising power, to be a leader.

After returning from exile in Vilnius, in 1892, as one of leaders of the Polish Socialist Party [the PPS], he was in favour of an active fight against the Russian rulership. As a political leader, he considered himself a providential man of the state. Presumably, he considered himself a kind of politician who is always right. To the utmost, he believed in his outstanding contribution to Poland's reconstruction of the statehood.

Dmowski was a type of reflective activist - who thoroughly tried to recognize the complexities of undergoing political processes. He was more of an analyst who had the gift of clearly formulating his thoughts and thus attracting followers than a man of struggle or a revolutionary. Unlike his opponent Piłsudski, he was definitely more in favour of evolution against revolution.

He expressed opinions about himself in a more restrained manner, as read in one of his letters to the great writer W. Reymont, with whom he was in a friendly relations: "I try to value myself a little and believe that I will be able to do something useful in the world" [Wapiński 2017].

## 2. Formulation of the political programme

The political thought of Dmowski is well-documented as he wrote a lot and had unique talents of formulating clearly his ideas. He belonged to the generation born shortly after the defeat of the January Uprising (1863). Hence, he grew up in a society in which resultant trauma was alive. Furthermore, the

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<sup>2</sup> The press at the time, reluctant to him, reported: "The Treaty of Versailles was signed by Ignacy Paderewski and another Pole".

<sup>3</sup> "Representatives of the government were absent" - as was noticed by one of his close associates, [Bielecki 1968, p. 283].

<sup>4</sup> This biographical outline is based on: Bielecki [1968]; Roman Dmowski [1985]; Kawalec [2009]; Petrycki [1920]; Roman Dmowski [1939] and Roman Dmowski [www.szkolnictwo.pl].

Franco-German War of 1870 put a shadow on the political thinking of Poles of that time - the victory of Prussia removed the Polish question from the European policy. So, there was doubt and a sense of helplessness, - counting for the support of Polish aspirations from abroad seemed to be a wishful thinking.

There was no hope that anything could change over the next decades. Therefore, diplomatic activity on the international stage, so vigorous before, ceased, and the idea of armed struggle against the invaders also abandoned. No realistic programme for rebuilding Poland was created<sup>5</sup>.

The political reflection of R. Dmowski was, in its basic shape, a reflection of the views of Z. Balicki and J. P. Pawłowski, his older ideological associates, which he undertook and - above all - described with a great literary skills.

The starting point for Dmowski's political deliberations was the analysis of the causes of the fall of the Commonwealth of Both Nations at the end of the 18th century. He strongly rejected the view that the reason for that collapse was the aggressiveness of the neighbour states, the three partitioning powers. He was convinced, that in political life the decisive factor is not a moral reason, but an argument of power, instead of: "there is less and less space for the weak and defenseless in this world". Thus the fall of the Polish state was caused by growing internal weaknesses. The nobility was to be blamed for this: "the Polish nobility ... [was] of a different social structure than the nobility of other nations ... the cities were only at the beginning of their development, [therefore] the nobility gained undivided power". He developed this thought as follows: "the Polish nobleman had no equivalent in any of the European societies. ... there, he had to fight for what he wanted to obtain ... in Poland, he lived like a greenhouse plant, without competition".

The disadvantages of the nobility were a reflection of the weaknesses of the whole society. Polish political solutions were ahead of those in force in Western Europe. Culturally, however, we were a much younger nation, also giving way to the general level of social and economic life. Hence such pessimistic statements: "our passivity ... we are, in fact, one of the largest and gentlest nations in Europe ... the basis of our character is passivity. ... The life of the society is passive, without concern for the future [as] the nobleman had no such need while the peasant had no opportunity to expand his influence".

According to Dmowski, the passive nobleman was supported by a Jew who was "largely a nobleman's manager, ... [and] became even the only source of information from the wider world". Describing all these critical assessments of the Polish state, which - after a period of splendor of the Renaissance "golden age" - fell down, overwhelmed by the weight of own ailments - Dmowski went to a clear description of the situation in individual partitions. In each of them, Polish society was under diversified political conditions, as well as different opportunities to cultivate its cultural traditions.

His diagnosis of the Prussian Partition was of great importance as he drawn a later conclusion as how to fight for regaining Polish statehood. In Prussia, "Polish society was forced to fight for language, faith, even bread, against the economic struggle of organized local Germans. ... The Prussians, wanting to exterminate us completely, did us a historical favour, namely, they created in this partition the conditions of accelerated transformation into an active society, full of combat energy, capable of gaining existence in the most difficult conditions" [Dmowski 2012].

In the Prussian partition, Polish society had conditions for self-organization, because the applicable law was respected. Hence, the Polish population could form various associations and unions, such as: Agricultural Circles, Volunteer Fire Brigade, cooperative banks, Popular Reading Societies and Open Universities, disseminating knowledge in rural environments. Thus, Dmowski put a high note on the state of Polishness which became the issue of defending nationality against Germanic pressure - "the fight on legal grounds expanded the knowledge of the law, becoming an example for Poles from other partitions" [Dmowski 2004].

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<sup>5</sup> "We expect nothing from political upheavals, wars and overwhelming treaties, foreign favours, but we trust only our own vitality"[Petrycki 1920, p.8].

Performance of a Polish people within the Russian partition was quite a different one. Also there, Polish culture was fought by the authorities, but political oppression and the voluntariness of those performing the power instead of complying formally with binding law<sup>6</sup>, resulted in the society's passivity.

Dmowski described an interesting thread of the significant influence of St. Petersburg emigration on the development of conservative thought: "The small St. Petersburg ship towed efficiently, dragging the heavy ark of conservatism in the Kingdom". The key role in this was played by V. Spasowich, "partly a Pole, partly a Russian, closely associated with the Russian liberal camp and living by its ideology. The zealous fighter of liberalism himself became a guide and the greatest political authority of the emerging group of Polish conservatives. An amazing combination had to give strange results".

Spasowich was a founder of the "Kraj ["Country"] journal, issued in St. Petersburg, liberal one from its beginnings. Conservatism-friendly tones, including respect for the Church, gradually strengthened ties between the St. Petersburg group and conservatives from the Kingdom.

Like the Warsaw ones, the St. Petersburg conservatists considered the uprising of 1863 a mistake, advocating for the rapprochement of Poles with Russian society. This was reflected in the rather vague slogan of "entering the state"<sup>7</sup>.

The Prussian authorities did not disturb him in any way, because he did not violate the law in any way. A similar case could not have happened in the Kingdom of Poland for the simple reason that the Tsarist authorities - not examining formal content of law - would immediately send him to Siberia.

The next partition was a part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, covering various nationalities. Unlike the two described earlier, the principle of broad autonomy was practiced there, without interfering with the cultivation of one's own culture.

That possibility was widely used by the population, not only freely using the Polish language in public institutions, but also comprehensively developing various forms of cultural and political activity - Polish deputies sat in the Viennese Parliament, sometimes fulfilling even ministerial functions.

In spite of that - the lack of obstacles from the authorities - the conservative thought stumbled in idle discussions and took care of itself. Polish conservatists there, being "at the mercy of the Austrian government ... they completely neglected broadly understood actions to raise awareness of the broad sections of the population, [which resulted] in a passive, indifferent attitude, even at the case of the most vital national interests" were involved ". Therefore, in the absence of internal strength, Polish activities in Galicia were losing their independence gradually. Hence, a timeless warning: "a great threat to the future of a nation, when the parties do not group according to great and fundamental ideas and aspirations, but become sociable coteries of insuring mutual influences"<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> An illustration of that: Michał Drzymała, a peasant from Poznań area, who became famous in Europe of that time, did not receive permission to construct his house. Therefore, he used a peculiar loophole and settled in a mobile residential horse-driven car, which he moved every day from one place of his field to another. The Prussian authorities did not disturb him in any way, because he did not violate the law in any way. A similar case could not have happened in the Kingdom of Poland for the simple reason that the Tsarist authorities - not examining formal content of law - would immediately send him to Siberia.

<sup>7</sup> "Spasowich was indeed an uncommonly mighty head," Dmowski described. See for some further information about him: Смолярчук В.И. В.Д.Спасович:ученый-юрист,литератор, судебный оратор // Советское государство и право. 1982. N 10.

<sup>8</sup> Cited after: Krzywiec 2009 p.VI.

### **3. Polish issues entering the international stage - the emerging independence**

Chances to regain independence depended on a development of political situation in the three partitioning states. Specifically, Dmowski maintained that Russia and Germany were of the key importance as Austria's power is far behind of that two. The significance of Russia strengthened the fact that she ruled the most extensive areas in pre-partition Poland. In those aspirations, he saw as allies other nations oppressed by Russia, especially Finns.

Dmowski's thought can be embraced briefly in that way: Germany, with good organization, economy and warfare, is able to organize Central Europe in its own way, allocating for Poland the role of a small state, without the possibility of opposing the German invasion - it is sticking to hard facts in thinking. The geopolitical location is such that the very logic of internal dynamics induces them to destroy the Polish nation in the long run.

Russia was in a state of such deep internal crisis that it would either transform into a nationally homogeneous state or fall victim to a great revolution - being not only incapable to destroy the Polish nation, but even to keep it under its rule. Russia's worst intentions and the efforts of the government were unable, in the long term, to prevent the reconstruction of Polish statehood [Bułhak 2000].

### **4. The state Duma and Dmowski's involvement**

Not much later, on 1-st August (14-th), the Russian side issued declarations regarding Polish lands - the first one among the partitioning powers. As Dmowski wanted, Polish matters entered the international fora. He prepared, for the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, a memorial regarding the reviving Polish state, postulating that its borders should include all of Poznań area and Warmia and Mazury (Ost Preussien).

Dmowski had such views already in 1908. As an author, he never sought to translate his work into foreign languages. The case of the book "Niemcy, Rosja i kwestia polska" ["Germany, Russia and the Polish question"] was different, because his idea to address that book also to foreigners. The intention was that Polish issues, forgotten for decades in European politics, would become the subject of international debate again [Dmowski 2010]. Hence, in 1908, a translation appeared in Paris under the title "La Question Polonaise", a year later - in Russian and in 1913 - in Finnish. That book was also published in Czech and Russian (unauthorized, without the author's formal consent). Dmowski's idea was well understood by the author of the preface to the French edition: "The Polish cause is a European matter which every European, especially a French, should be interested in, because it depends on maintaining or destroying what is left of European balance". Dmowski position was supported by the inter-partition Congress of the National Democracy, which was convened considering threat of the outbreak of war<sup>9</sup>. A similar Congress took place in Zakopane in June 1914. Dmowski presented a Paper, directly saying about the impending world war.

Dmowski's studies on the functioning of the Tsarist administration led to the conviction of Russia's weakness - he criticized its bureaucratization and objectification of the man by the authorities. He believed that the Russian state lacked sufficiently strong mechanisms to carry out effectively the necessary reforms. These observations were only confirmed by the Japanese-Russian war. During it, two politicians met in Tokyo - Dmowski, who arrived first and Piłsudski. Both sought to win Japan's favour for Poland. However, their goals were completely different. Piłsudski was trying to get the support for a possible anti-Russian uprising in Poland. Dmowski, on the contrary, tried to explain to the Japanese authorities that it was in the interest of both nations to avoid it. In the submitted memorial and

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<sup>9</sup> His final resolution stated: i) One should strive to unify all the lands of all the partitions, with access to the sea and the recovery of Upper Silesia; ii) Poles should not support both German and Austrian policies; iii) In alliance with France and England, Russia is less dangerous than Germany [Matysiakowa-Muszyńska, Muszyński 2009, p.132].



during direct meetings, he argued that Russia was strong enough to suppress such a rebellion. The state of tension and uncertainty was therefore favourable as binding military troops that would otherwise be sent to the front.

In the account written by his close associate, Dmowski describes the 12-hour conversation with Piłsudski: "I knew that we would not come to an agreement, but how many worries we had in common! I told Piłsudski: 'I will not slander you, but I will disturb' ... And I really tried my best to thwart his plans". In the end, the intended uprising did not take place, and the Japanese government treated Piłsudski's plans with reserve.

The changes that took place in Russia after the 1905 revolution gave the opportunity to Poles to articulate their aspirations in the Russian Duma. Dmowski was one of the deputies and becoming a chairman of the Polish Group. When the First World War broke out, at an extraordinary meeting of the Duma on 26-th July (8-th August) 1914, a member of the National Democracy, W. Jaroszyński, spoke on behalf of a group of Polish deputies: "All internal settlements should be removed to the background, the most important thing is to repel Teutons from Slavs - after the victory, so that there could be a unification of the nation, split in three parts by the partitioners". Seeing this statement, Roman Dmowski said: "Never in our life has any of our political steps silenced me so much . ... he expressed our aspirations to unify Polish lands, he brought the Polish matter into the war programme and in a form that knocked the weapon out of the hands of war opponents, Russian Germanophiles, by strongly emphasizing our solidarity with Russia".

Not much later, on 1-st August (14-th), the Russian side issued declarations regarding Polish lands – the first one among the partitioning powers. As Dmowski wanted, Polish matters entered the international fora. He prepared, for the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, a memorial regarding the reviving Polish state, postulating that its borders should include all of Poznań area and Warmia and Mazury (Ost Preussien).

Russian war failures prompted Dmowski to go West to seek support for the Polish cause there. The establishment, in 1917, of the National Polish Committee in Lausanne (based in Paris) was a spectacular achievement of Roman Dmowski' politics. Allied countries recognized it as the international representation of the reviving Polish state [Bielecki 1968].

## **During the Second Republic of Poland period - a man not free from controversy**

Dmowski returned to Poland in a Spring of 1919. Not many months later, the Polish-Bolshevik war broke out. He joined the National Defense Council, which, in May 1920, he left as a result of the conflict with Piłsudski.

In independent Poland, he certainly didn't make a political career. The episode in 1923 of holding the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the cabinet of Wincenty Witos, was very short (7 October – 14 December). Despite that, he notified, in 13-th December the recognition of the USSR by Poland, which enabled diplomatic relations to be established at the level of the embassies. He was also in favour of elaboration of a trade agreement between the two countries. At the end of 1925, Dmowski had a talk of about 2 hours with the USSR ambassador, P. Wojkow, who found it very interesting and an pointed-out a number of topics shared by the two interlocutors.

Active participation in politics was hindered by the fact that Dmowski remained in open opposition to the Piłsudski group<sup>10</sup>. Dmowski himself also did not see himself very much in active political life: "I

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<sup>10</sup> .His opponent from the time of the Paris peace conference, Paderewski, said with concern in Chicago in October 1922 that distinguished and competent people were marginalized by mediocre people and pointed out Dmowski

want to build Poland according to a broad plan with the help of people sharing my thoughts, to the best of my strength. For this, you still need to have everything in your mind. In each state job, you "die" from details. Finally, I want to get the freedom to speak loudly what I think. ... In short, my ambition is to have more influence than one can have in a clerical position " [Niklewska 2017, p. 284].

The interwar period is therefore the one in which Dmowski participated in political life indirectly, through his lively journalistic activities, through numerous meetings as well as public speeches. The activity of R. Dmowski in those years - also due to the lack of an appropriate room in this publication - will be presented briefly and that issue certainly deserves further research.

Therefore, not being connected with current political life, he remained a watchful observer of the events taking place around him. His opinions on the subject of the economy deserve a comment, because he does not hide his skepticism towards the "etatist" trend, i.e. in favour of the significant presence of the state in the economy. Dmowski was convinced that the successful modernization of the economy required changes in the mental sphere of broad social masses - every citizen should therefore have a sense of responsibility for the state. In particular, he was therefore a "spokesperson" for increasing the role in the social life of the lower and middle social strata.

He also noted that teaching sober thinking that recognizes the hard and even brutal reality is associated with an increase in the level of education. In his opinion, the most appropriate place to instill youth in their duties towards society is a family. The material resources may be expanded in the state only by an active and entrepreneurial citizen. This is connected with respect for personal freedom in public life, because only then will society not lose in its rivalry with other nations: "We have to live, grow, develop our activities in all fields ... so that others may take from us in the future, just as we took from others and how we take from them today".

Dmowski was a supporter of an economic state, strongly opposed to the extensive system of social benefits, causing excessive spending of public funds - it was in conflict with the effective spending of money from the state budget. It was not conducive to the fact that in difficult economic conditions citizens could learn to live and work sparingly and preventively. He also realized that excessive public expenditure was accompanied by waste and abuse [Szołucha 2010].

Observation of the great economic crisis led Dmowski, to the conviction that it is permanent and that the "old continent" is beginning to give way to countries from other parts of the world, such as the USA, China or Brazil. He assumed that there would be a return to autarky (self-isolation in the sphere of the economy), which would favour the strengthening of authoritarian governments, being ineffective in achieving the social welfare they declared, but skillful in mobilizing the masses through ideology [Kapica 2013].

Authoritarian tendencies were not unknown to Dmowski himself. In an article from 1925, he openly admitted: "I am not at all disgusted with the idea of dictatorship. I am convinced that Mussolini's dictatorship is a great happiness for his homeland. ... If we had at least half of Mussolini's value, if we could create at least half of a fascist organization that would not be the least neither a company of mutual adoration, nor a mafia, I would gladly agree to a dictatorship in Poland" [Kawalec 2009]. Although these views have to be seen in the context of the times they were written down, when no further events were brought about by the fascist movement, they had an impact on the fact that the fascist movement was attracting its supporters in Poland.

Dmowski's views on the Jewish question were no less controversial. His prejudices were permanent and very emotional. In his historical analysis, he considered the symbiosis of the gentry and Jews as one of the important reasons for the fall of pre-partition Poland. One of his interlocutors recalls: "If I appeared as a supporter of assimilation, he claimed that this would be the greatest misfortune, Poland would die, and Judeopolonia would arise, completely alien from our spirit ". His contemporary critics

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as an example: "Dmowski, one of the most enlightened minds in Europe, one of the most educated, if not the deepest-educated statesman I know wastes in idleness his talent and strength" – cited after: Niklewska 2019, p.283.

aptly accuse those opinions of Dmowski as "an extract of the Polish version of hackatism" and "an expression of national egoism in its purest Prussian form" [Krzywiec 2009 pp. 399-400]. Dmowski's journalism undoubtedly contributed to the rising wave of anti-Semitism observed in the environment of National Democracy and especially among the All-Polish Youth.

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\*

He spent the last years of his life in his estate in Chludowo near Poznań and (the last days) in Drozdów near Łomża. Remaining only a keen observer of the political scene, he said bitter words: "The Polish state has great development prospects ahead of it: it is only necessary that people in politics could learn as easily as they become demoralized" [Dmowski 1939].

### **Instead of conclusions – some remarks of the author**

The work published in this volume is a significant discovery for the author himself, because during its elaboration he understood in a different light in the political activities of J. Piłsudski and R. Dmowski - completely agreeing with the opinion from the "Preface" for an extensive study of the historical role of Dmowski by one of his collaborators [Giertych 1968 pp. VI-VII] : "Dmowski and Piłsudski's policies were two mutually exclusive policies: one was right, the other was wrong. ... I am on the side of Dmowski".

Both politicians differed significantly regarding relations with the Eastern neighbour. Dmowski perfectly understood that Russia would remain and the attitude towards what constitute its nature, to Russian people is more important than the attitude towards passing governments.

Both politicians were heading to independent Poland. Dmowski was in favour of developing agreements between the two nations Poles and Russians, considering the strategic goal of opposing the German domination. Dmowski's policy was directed "towards the West" - concerning his territorial preferences as to the shape of the future Polish state. Contrary, Piłsudski was oriented to the "East" as to the territorial priorities of the future state, with some neglect of its Western borders. Dmowski was a man of diplomatic prudence, Piłsudski - of a revolutionary action.

There is no clear answer to the question of whether Dmowski was a liberal. One can answer in the affirmative if we refer to the widest formula of liberalism - as a political approach advocating limiting the role of the state to the necessary minimum and proclaiming the principle that the unrestricted activity of individuals, both in the political and economic field, is a source of progress in social life.

Getting acquainted with Dmowski's political thought is at the same time an inspirational cognitive study that facilitates a better understanding of the political situation in both countries and emerging threats in functioning democracy and performing liberal values, both individual and in social life. And "last but not least" - better understanding between people from neighboring countries.

### **Postscriptum. Roman Dmowski (selected quotations from his works) - current warnings for us, contemporaries?**

"Waking up antagonisms, sowing mutual distrust, exploiting the darkest instincts in order to achieve that the conflicted elements can seek support only in government - it has remained to be the practice of the ruling authorities to this day"

"The government, identifying itself with the state, each of its opponents - in the mildest way expressing its opposition and even the one that could only be suspected of an oppositional way of thinking - always treated as an internal enemy of the state. It was the government's policy to destroy every opponent. ... Under these conditions, the state must roll downhill, in anticipation of new external and internal disasters that will shake it again in its foundations and with more terrible results."

(„Niemcy, Rosja i kwestia polska”, Lwów 1908)

"A dictator, unaware of the country's performance, lacking a clear, sensible plan of action and a willingness to persevere on the chosen path, without enough support in the country, practicing demagoguery and forced to buy followers for state money, very quickly could "deal" with our newly rebuilt state. You have to be a madman to give all the power to one man under similar conditions. "

"Today, the position of European countries and the spirit of the times mean that almost everywhere governments are more or less shabby. Take, for example, England: in the last election, conservatives, the most mature element in the country, have won a great victory, and they are often forced to act like drunken radicals."

(„Sny a rzeczywistość”, „Warszawska Gazeta Poranna”, December 1925)

"After the reconstruction of the state, the political system of the Republic of Poland, on the one hand, and on the other, the small-mindedness of the spheres rooted in the moral culture of the last period, opened wide the gates to the political arena for the elements seeking nourishment for their cheap and false ambitions and for their stomachs, people with a weak civil conscience and with poor honour. After the great historical event of the rebirth of Poland, the fight for small things began, for saturation of lower appetites - a policy in which even parliamentary diets were the object of covetousness and the ultimate goal of action for many. People who make politics for profit, for personal careers, usually prefer to be live cowards than the corpses of heroes. A type of politician has emerged who is extremely skilled in system games, compromises, and pacts, designed to deceive the other side, even by blackmail, but in difficult moments connected with personal danger, behaving like a mouse under a broom. ... With these people we were forced to fill high and responsible positions and in vain expect them to be able to stand on their own feet."

"We need to rush to change the political organization of the society, make a new selection of people, we must bring to the fore people who have strong faith and conscience and have the courage to defend what they believe. In the most difficult moments, you have to be brave, able to keep your mind awakened and put it well above empty eloquence and skills in collusions. We need to value a sense of responsibility more than proficiency in sterile discussions."

(„Potrzeba nowego doboru”, „Warszawska Gazeta Poranna” June 1926)

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