

## Chapter 7: Pogrom Cries

Judging from the popularity of conspiracy theories regarding the postwar Polish pogroms against the Jews,<sup>1</sup> Polish historians are less interested in the overt aspects of these pogroms than the hidden ones. For instance, very few studies have explored the character and the conditions of the aggression against the

---

1 Among Polish researchers of postwar pogroms, those who argued that these events were incited by the “blood libel legend” were in a decisive minority. The most important figure was Krystyna Kersten, who called this legend a “social dynamite”; id., *Polacy, Żydzi, komunizm. Anatomia półprawd 1939–68*. Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza: Warsaw 1992. The legend was also discussed in the same vein in Cichopek, Anna: *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie 11 sierpnia 1945 r.* Żydowski Instytut Historyczny: Warsaw 2000; Szaynok, Bożena: *Pogrom Żydów w Kielcach 4 lipca 1946*. Bellona: Warsaw 1992; and Zaremba, Marcin: “Mit mordu rytualnego w powojennej Polsce. Archeologia i hipotezy”. *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* 2, 2007, pp. 91–135. Their reasoning did not arouse special interest. Instead, journalists such as Kąkolewski, Krzysztof: *Umarły cmentarz. Wstęp do studiów nad wyjaśnieniem przyczyn i przebiegu morderstwa Żydów w Kielcach dnia 4 lipca 1946 roku*. Wydawnictwo Von Borowiecki: Warsaw 1996; priests, e.g. Śledzianowski, Jan: *Pytania nad pogromem kieleckim*. Jedność: Kielce 1998; and numerous historians kept looking for proofs of a conspiracy. Verification of the conspiracy thesis was attempted in the twelve-year long investigation by the IPN (Institute of National Remembrance), summarized in two volumes: Żaryn, Jan / Kamiński, Łukasz (eds.): *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*. Instytut Pamięci Narodowej: Kielce and Warsaw 2006, see particularly pp. 478, 471–472, etc.; id.: *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*. Instytut Pamięci Narodowej: Kielce and Warsaw 2008. Stalin’s file was also perused for any signs of an NKVD conspiracy: Materski, Wojciech / Paczkowski, Andrzej (eds.): *NKWD o Polsce i Polakach. Rekonesans archiwalny*. Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN: Warsaw 1996; Cariewskaja, Tatiana et al. (eds.): *Teczka specjalna J. W. Stalina. Raporty NKWD z Polski 1944–1946*. Rytm: Warsaw 1998. Józef Orlicki suggested the involvement of Zionists; id.: *Szkice do dziejów stosunków polsko-żydowskich 1918–1949*. Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza: Szczecin 1983. A similar hypothesis, albeit not restricted to Zionists, is elaborated in Bishop Czesław Kaczmarek’s “Raport biskupa Czesława Kaczmarka przekazany ambasadorowi USA w Warszawie Arthurowi Bliss Lane’owi”, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 191. Others, e.g. Krzysztof Kaczmarek, employee of the IPN in Rzeszów, seem to have been persuaded by a modernized version of the blood libel, which ascribes to the Jews the desire to “feed on” the blood of “Polish children” after the war; Kaczmarek, Krzysztof: *Pogrom którego nie było. Rzeszów 11–12 czerwca 1945. Fakty, hipotezy, dokumenty*. Instytut Pamięci Narodowej: Rzeszów 2008.

Jews, despite its obvious manifestation.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, I would like to use hitherto overlooked source material characterized by immediacy. The immediacy of sources appears in historical discourse when instead of paraphrasing the utterances of the participants, they are simply allowed to speak. A paraphrase is always anachronistic, whereas live speech recorded in sources is a kind of a fossil that transmits the voice of an era.

This chapter, inspired by Victor Turner's anthropology of performance,<sup>3</sup> analyzes a particular aspect of this voice: the cries of the mob gathered along the route taken on 12 June 1945 by the militia escorting Jewish tenants of the house at 3 Tannenbauma St.; the mob gathered on 11 August 1945 at 27 Miodowa St. in Kraków; as well as that at 7 Planty St. in Kielce on 4 July 1946.<sup>4</sup> I will treat these cries as a source for the study of mentality. They allow us to view the three analyzed pogroms as a kind of a spectacle, which Turner calls "social drama". Thanks to particular performative features, Pogrom Cries reveal, in historical events,

the "taxonomy" of social relations between actors (their family relationships, structural positions, social classes, political status), their current relationships and conflicts of interest and friendship, the network of personal relationships and informal relations.<sup>5</sup>

Let us examine what those cries say about the nature of the pogrom mobs, about their agenda, and about the accusations they level against Jews.

- 
- 2 One could mention here the publications listed in the first part of footnote 1; however, only Marcin Zaremba's study is entirely devoted to the issues in question. See also, Tokarska-Bakir, Joanna, "Social Portrait of the Kielce Pogrom", 2 vols. (forthcoming).
  - 3 Turner, Victor: *From Ritual to Theatre: On Human Seriousness of Play*. PAJ Publications: New York 1982, p. 110. Also Turner, Victor: *Schism and Continuity in an African Society*. Manchester University Press: Manchester 1957; id.: *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Actions in Human Society*. Cornell University Press: Ithaca and London 1974.
  - 4 Sources: Żaryn, Jan / Kamiński, Łukasz (eds.): *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*. Instytut Pamięci Narodowej: Kielce and Warsaw 2006; id. (eds.): *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*. Instytut Pamięci Narodowej: Kielce and Warsaw 2008; Meducki, Stanisław / Wrona, Zenon (eds.): *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie 4 lipca 1946 roku. Dokumenty i materiały I*. Kieleckie Towarzystwo Naukowe: Kielce 1992; Meducki, Stanisław (ed.): *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie 4 lipca 1946 roku. Dokumenty i materiały II*. Kieleckie Towarzystwo Naukowe: Kielce 1994; Łoziński, Marcel: *Materiały z filmu "Świadkowie"*. Video transcript, unpublished typescript, p. 44; Więcek, Tadeusz (ed.): *Zabić Żyda! Kulisy i tajemnice pogromu kieleckiego 1946*. Oficyna Wydawnicza: Kraków 1992; Blus-Węgorowska, Danuta: *Pogrom kielecki*. (master's thesis) Uniwersytet Warszawski: Warsaw 1994.
  - 5 Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, p. 9.

While some Polish researchers<sup>6</sup> have already explored this issue, it still remains quite ambiguous. Although it has been established that all but one (Przedbórz) postwar Jewish pogrom in Poland began with a blood libel rumor, to most researchers – as noted first by Marcin Zaremba<sup>7</sup> – it is, in a sense, invisible. Even such an inquisitive sociologist as Jan Tomasz Gross questions the social ontology of *blood libel*, calling it a mere “pretext” or “excuse” for the pogrom violence. He argues that as Jewish aggression toward ‘Christian children’ is out of the question, the belief in ritual murder could not have been the cause of the explosion of collective anti-Jewish phobia.<sup>8</sup> Otherwise one would have to assume a complete dissonance between social experience and collective action. “Jews could not have been perceived as a threat by their neighbors for their alleged vampirism,” Gross writes. According to him, the desire to wipe the Jews off the face of the earth was not a manifestation of parental love and despair in response to the perceived Jewish threat. “[...] assaulting the Jews would not visibly promote one’s children’s welfare.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, concludes the historian, it was not the belief in ritual murder that had triggered the pogroms.

I believe, similarly to Jan Gross, that the ritual murder legend has, since its appearance in Europe, functioned as a justification of anti-Jewish violence, motivated e.g. by economic or political reasons; however, under no circumstances can I agree that its instrumentalization was tantamount to the accusers’ disbelief in the *blood libel*. This is contradicted not only by historical sources, but also by traces of the blood legend still noted in Polish provinces.<sup>10</sup> The fact that they are still present in contemporary Poland also meets with general disbelief. The situation has been aptly summarized by Marcin Zaremba: “The myth of Jewish

---

6 See footnote 1.

7 Zaremba, “Mit mordu rytualnego”, p. 91.

8 Marcin Zaremba states: “It is symptomatic that a very similar position, which diminishes the significance of the ritual murder myth, can be found in Catholic historiography. In one of his articles, Jan Żaryn [‘Hierarchia kościoła katolickiego wobec relacji polsko-żydowskich w latach 1945,’ in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, pp. 94–97], addressing the criticisms directed at the Church in Poland for its lack of a strong reaction from the bishops to the spread of ritual murder stories after the war, on the one hand pointed to those who invented the rumors and created a ‘certain psychosis,’ and on the other admitted that in the Catholic Church there was a ‘tradition that could not have been taken lightly.’ ”

9 Gross, Jan T.: *Fear. Antisemitism in Poland after Auschwitz*. Princeton University Press: New York 2006, pp. 245–246.

10 See Tokarska-Bakir, Joanna: *Legendy o krwi. Antropologia przesądu*. W.A.B.: Warsaw 2008, pp. 411–454.

vampirism does not fit the dominant picture of Polish-Jewish relations immediately after the war.”<sup>11</sup>

Based on an analysis of pogrom Pogrom Cries, I once again propose to examine the above issue, this time focusing on the nature of the pogrom mobs in Rzeszów, Kraków, and Kielce, the character of the aggression toward the Jews, and the role of *blood libel* in inciting these pogroms.

### Four features of a mob

When we analyze pogrom cries from the aspect of their form, we find three types of utterances: statements, slogans,<sup>12</sup> and exhortations.<sup>13</sup> The first category comprises observations, complaints, and voices of indignation,<sup>14</sup> which – albeit audible to the persons standing close to the speaker – did not reach the status of collective apostrophes as did the more abstract slogans and exhortations. Whereas statements are always connected with the personal context of the

---

11 Zaremba, “Mit mordu rytualnego”, p. 92. See also Kersten, *Polacy, Żydzi, komunizm*, p. 118: “Even politicians from the former ONR [*Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny*, National Radical Camp] milieu understood that [...] the blood murder rumor could not demonstrate that the Polish nation did not want communism, but only show the terrifying ignorance of the Poles.”

12 “A slogan is a brief, apt formula, easy to repeat, polemical and most frequently anonymous, aimed at persuading the masses to perform some action and does so both through style as an element of self-justification, emotional or intellectual, that it includes,” Reboul, Olivier: “Kiedy słowo jest bronią”. In: Głowiński, Michał (ed.): *Język i społeczeństwo*. Czytelnik: Warsaw 1980, p. 299 ff.

13 A slogan (e.g. the title of Marcel Déat’s article “Mourir pour Danzig?”. *Oeuvre* [August 1939]) is true or false by virtue of a statement it must necessarily include, whereas an exhortation (e.g. “Forward!”), does not, in principle, contain such a statement; see Reboul, “Kiedy słowo jest bronią”, 307. Manipulating the truth status of a statement, however, often blurs the difference between an exhortation and a slogan.

14 Statement of a civilian KW MO [*Komenda Wojewódzka Milicji Obywatelskiej*, Citizen’s Militia Provincial Command] employee, Rzeszów: “I would shoot all of them”; “Sprawozdanie z przebiegu zajęć antyżydowskich w Rzeszowie 12/6/1945, sporządzonego przez zarząd Żydowskiej Gminy Wyznaniowej w Rzeszowie dla CKŻP”. In: Kaczmarek, *Pogrom którego nie było*, 94; see also *ibid.*, p. 97: “We now know from experience what the attitude of our defenders is should the Jews find themselves in a critical position; it can be expressed with the words one militia man addressed to a Polish acquaintance: ‘We can’t do anything to them as long as the Soviets are [here]; I would shoot 100 myself.’ ”

speaker, slogans<sup>15</sup> and exhortations<sup>16</sup> can function independently of the speaker, thus making it possible to incite the crowd, particularly with auto-hypnotic, repetitive formulas.

Elias Canetti writes about four features of a crowd/mass, irreducible to the individuals who make it up.

1. It wants to grow constantly.
2. There is equality within the mass, ‘absolute and undisputed [...]. People turn into a mass due to this equality.’
3. Mass has a proclivity for thickening, ‘it is never too dense.’
4. Mass needs a direction. ‘It is in motion and moves toward something definite. The direction common to all its members reinforces the sense of equality.’<sup>17</sup>

If by “direction” we mean the identity gradually created by a pogrom mob, this criterion can be considered superior to all the other ones. It enforces the internal “equality” of the crowd, and as a result of the expulsion of alien elements, it also influences its “density”. Furthermore, the “growth” of a mob depends on the attractiveness of the mob’s identity to the bystanders, and – what is important in the case of the events described here – to the security services deployed to pacify the mass. We can use these four criteria to synthetically describe all three pogrom crowds.

### **Re 4 and 3: Direction and density**

All of these pogrom mobs gained their “direction” from the exhortations of revenge against the Jews. In Kielce, the mob was activated by a rumor about the abduction of Henio Błaszcyk, which had been in circulation for a few weeks. I refer those who think that the mob did not believe the slogans it exclaimed, or that they were a mere cynical provocation, to Chapter 5: The Figure of Bloodsucker in Polish religious, national and left-wing discourse in the years 1945/1946. Genuine belief in the blood libel is manifest in the most common cries of the Kielce pogrom:

---

15 “They export coal to the Soviets, and from there [bring] carloads of Jews,” example from “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Władysława Sobczyńskiego, 7/8/1946”. In: Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie*, p. 319.

16 For example, “Beat the Jews!” in the Rzeszów pogrom; Leib Kaplan’s testimony quoted in Kaczmarek, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 76.

17 Canetti, Elias / Borg, Eliza / Przybyłowska, Maria (transl.): *Masa i władza (Masse und Macht)*. Czytelnik: Warsaw 1996 [1960].

- ‘down with the Jews, kill them, because they catch Polish children and torture them cruelly’<sup>18</sup>
- ‘give our children back’<sup>19</sup>
- ‘Jews, where are our children, what have you done with our children?’<sup>20</sup>
- ‘my dear baby ... they killed him/her here [a woman moaning in front of the building at 7 Planty St.]’<sup>21</sup>
- ‘where [are] our murdered children, we’ll take revenge on you’<sup>22</sup>
- ‘oh, oh! our Polish children [have been] murdered’ [a woman at 7 Planty St.]<sup>23</sup>
- ‘down with the Jews! they murder our children! we don’t need them [the Jews]!’ [Biskupska St.]<sup>24</sup>
- ‘beat them for our children’<sup>25</sup>
- ‘the Jews are in power and that’s why they murder our children!’ [Biskupska St.]<sup>26</sup>
- ‘it must be true that our children have been tormented to death!’; ‘and look! and look!’ [a nun]<sup>27</sup>
- ‘the Jews have murdered children’ [workers from the Ludwików steel mill]<sup>28</sup>

---

18 “Protokół zatrzymania, 4/7/1946”. In: Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 114.

19 Nurowska; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 62.

20 “Zeznanie w WUBP w Kielcach Marii Welfman”, July 6, 1946, as cited in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 161.

21 Kaczmarek, Czesław: “Raport biskupa Czesława Kaczmarka przekazany ambasadorowi USA w Warszawie Arthurowi Bliss Lane’owi”. In: Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 191.

22 “Zeznanie w WUBP w Kielcach Marii Welfman”, July 6, 1946, as cited in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 161.

23 “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanej Antoniny Biskupskiej”, July 5, 1946 as cited in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 129.

24 Ibid.

25 “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Ryszarda Sałapy”, July 24, 1946 as cited in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 216.

26 “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanej Antoniny Biskupskiej”, July 5, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 131.

27 Ibid.

28 Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 10. “An employee of the foundry [Ludwików steel mill] [...] ran around the plant departments with a metal bar in his hand [...] saying a Polish boy whom the Jews wanted to kill for matzo had escaped from a Jewish home,” “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Mariana Nogaję” October 15, 2001, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 122.

- ‘the Jews have murdered 14 of our children, and all mothers and fathers should gather and kill all the Jews’<sup>29</sup>

Similar cries can be found in the files documenting the earlier pogroms in Rzeszów:

- ‘murder of several dozen children by the Jews!’ [a newspaper seller’s cry]<sup>30</sup>
- ‘criminals and murderers of Catholic children!’ [mob gathered in Tannenbauma St.]<sup>31</sup>
- ‘sons of bi..., you want to get Poland, [so] you are murdering [people]!’<sup>32</sup>

and in Kraków:

- ‘help, people, [the Jews] were trying to murder me!’ [cry of a 13-year-old Antoś Nijaki, rushing out of the synagogue in Miodowa St.]<sup>33</sup>
- ‘we did not raise our children to have them now murdered by the Jews!’ [a judge’s wife at the so-called Tandeta, a market in Podgórze, a district of Kraków]<sup>34</sup>
- ‘you lousy kike [woman], you murdered two Polish children, you’re going to die in jail’<sup>35</sup> [Gendarmerie Corporal Jan Podstawski, militiamen Edmund Bartosik and Czesław Hynek to Stanisława Saletnik, taken for a Jewess]
- ‘that’s the one murdering in the prayer house’ [militiamen Bolesław Skrzypek and Józef Bednarczyk about Hilel Kleiner]<sup>36</sup>

---

29 “Protokół przesłuchania Mojżesza Cukiera” July 6, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, pp. 113–114.

30 “Notatka kpt. Braude”, in Kaczmarek, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 134. Also “Sprawozdanie w sprawie wypadków zaszłych w Rzeszowie w dniu 12 czerwca 1945, Wojewódzka Żydowska Komisja Historyczna”, June 16, 1945, in Kaczmarek, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 100.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 99.

32 *Ibid.*

33 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Antoniego Nijakiego w WUBP”, August 14, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, pp. 150–151.

34 “Akt oskarżenia przeciw 25 uczestnikom pogromu w dn. 11 sierpnia”, September 5, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 212. Cf. a similar cry in Kielce: “whose children are we going to raise, etc.”; testimony of Tadeusz Kociałkowski, a barber, after Blus-Węgrowa, *Pogrom kielecki*, p. 53.

35 “Postanowienie o pociągnięciu do odpowiedzialności karnej Podstawskiego Jana i Bartosika Edmunda”, July 22, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 81.

36 “Przesłuchanie Hilela Kleinera – agenta towarzystwa ubezpieczeniowego”, quoted in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, pp. 82, 157, 211.

The pogrom mob might give the impression of an amorphous jumble, but eventually a clear collective identity emerges within the crowd. The mob's actions – particularly acts of violence – are irrevocable, and therefore determine its identity and further conduct to a very high extent.<sup>37</sup> Thus emerges a collective *Wirbewusstsein*,<sup>38</sup> a feeling of “who we are”, who can become “one of us” (*unsereiner*<sup>39</sup>) and who is an outsider. Typically, every process of creating an identity begins with determining the latter.<sup>40</sup> During a pogrom, identity markers are expressed in exhortatory cries, which function as performatives programming the behavior of the crowd. Not all cries catch on,<sup>41</sup> as they must fit the expectations of the mass. The cries with which the mob identifies trigger the process of its thickening, of segregation into “us and them”, of specifying who is who and what liberties one can take with them. The following are the examples of such cries from Kraków:

- ‘kike [women], kike [women]!’ [street urchins to Hanna Zajdman and her girlfriend]<sup>42</sup>
- ‘those lousy kikes’ [an employee of the city council in Kraków]<sup>43</sup>

---

37 See Appadurai, Arjun: *Fear of Small Numbers. An Essay on Geography of Anger*. Duke University Press: Durham and London 2006, p. 6: “Violence can create a macabre form of certainty and can become a brutal technique (a folk discovery-procedure) about ‘them’ and, therefore, about ‘us.’”

38 Vansina, Jan: *Oral Tradition as History*. Routledge and Kegan Paul: London 1985, p. 92.

39 Shachar, Isaiah: *The Judensau. A Medieval Anti-Jewish Motif and Its History*. Warburg Institute: London 1974, p. 3.

40 This can be supported with what we know about the importance of difference in the emergence of collective identities; see Obrębski, Józef: “Dzisiejsi ludzie Polesia”. *Przegląd Socjologiczny* 3(4), 1936, pp. 414–447; Barth, Frederic: *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Little, Brown: New York 1969.

41 Thus e.g. during a PPR rally to condemn the Kraków pogrom of August 1945, the crowd did not follow the exhortation “To the University!” that was to direct “people’s anger” at the professors of the Jagiellonian University, accused by the communist authorities of having organized the pogrom. See Kochański, Aleksander (ed.): *Protokoły posiedzeń sekretariatu PPR 1945–1948*. ISP PAN: Warsaw 2001, p. 97: “The exhortation ‘To the University!’ was not taken up by Drobner [deputy chairman of the Supreme Council of PPS]; instead, he dissolved the rally. The workers were furious [...]”

42 “Protokół spisany z ob. Zajdman Hanną, ur 1930 w Warszawie”, August 20, 1945, AŻIH, 301/1582.

43 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Artura Silbera”, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 165.



- ‘beat the Jews’ [caretaker Franciszek Bandys]<sup>44</sup>
- ‘a kike [woman]? If she’s a kike, beat her’ [a WP Gendarmerie corporal and two militiamen]<sup>45</sup>
- ‘kill, because it’s a Jewish child’ [political and educational officer of the 1<sup>st</sup> WP Command running after a five-year-old girl]<sup>46</sup>
- ‘what do you care, you son of a bitch, it’s a Jewish child’ [a militiaman to a member of KRN [*Krajowa Rada Narodowa*, State National Council], who was trying to stop him]<sup>47</sup>
- ‘it’s scandalous for a Pole not to have the civil courage to hit an unarmed man’ [a railroad worker beating a wounded Jew in hospital]<sup>48</sup>
- ‘this crooked kike [woman], they made a real mess of her’ [a nun in a hospital to a wounded Hanna Zajdman, taken for a gentile]<sup>49</sup>
- ‘the mob shouted that I should be arrested because I’m a Jew’ [Dawid Ruber]<sup>50</sup>
- ‘fuck it, why do you work for those fucking Jews!’<sup>51</sup> [militiaman Franciszek Kucharski to a girl in a Jewish shop]<sup>52</sup>

The following are the cries from the Kielce pogrom belonging to the same category:

- ‘A Jew! Hit him!’<sup>53</sup>
- ‘hit’, ‘Jew’ [a young man having checked Abram Moszkowicz’s ID]<sup>54</sup>

---

44 “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Franciszka Bandysa w MUBP”, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 138.

45 “Postanowienie o pociągnięciu do odpowiedzialności karnej Podstawskiego Jana i Bartosika Edmunda”, August 22, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 81.

46 “Postanowienie o pociągnięciu do odpowiedzialności karnej sierż. Jedynowicza Stanisława”, August 22, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, pp. 83, 209.

47 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Drzewieckiego Michała, posła do Krajowej Rady Narodowej”, August 21, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 83.

48 “Protokół spisany z ob. Zajdman Hanną, ur 1930 w Warszawie”, August 20, 1945, AŻIH, 301/1582.

49 Ibid.

50 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Dawida Rabera w MUBP”, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 135.

51 “Zeznanie współpracownika MUBP Edmunda Łukawieckiego o zachowaniu milicjanta Kucharskiego”, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 136.

52 Ibid., p. 206.

53 Kalicki; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 86.

54 After: Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 119.

- ‘hit [her]! It’s a kike [woman]’ [women in Planty St.]<sup>55</sup>
- ‘you kike [woman]’ [to Jadwiga Najgeburska]<sup>56</sup>
- ‘a man was walking by, they said he was a Jew, so I hit him. An officer said that it’s forbidden to hit him, that he is not a Jew. If I’d known, I wouldn’t have hit [him].’<sup>57</sup>

An attack on a Polish woman with a Semitic appearance is regarded as a mistake.<sup>58</sup> Similarly a civilian is left in peace, saved by his wife’s or relative’s words: ‘Don’t hit him, he’s a Pole.’<sup>59</sup> WP soldier Maks Erlbaum finds himself in a different situation:

[Testimony of an employee of the Kielce PUBP (*Powiatowy Urząd Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego*, District Office of State Security)]

I saw some sergeant draw a revolver from that Jew’s holster. Then the soldier shouted [at the defendant, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Marzęcki], “Lieutenant [‘I’m Polish’ – the witness added these words later in the interrogation], please defend me” and showed him his military identity card. The lieutenant examined the identity card, returned it to the soldier, and ordered the sergeant to return the seized pistol, which is what the sergeant did. Then some woman shouted: “Let me through, I’ll identify him” and started to open the fly on his trousers. At that moment I took the soldier away and brought him to Division Headquarters. [...] Some school kid, who was standing next to Lieutenant Marzęcki, said: “Erlbaum is a Jewish surname.”<sup>60</sup>

Maks Erlbaum, the victim, gives a different version:

As I was approaching the end of the street, all of a sudden the defendant Manecka grabbed me by the wrist and demanded to see my [identity] documents. [...] Then some lieutenant arrived, I approached him and asked him to help me, showing him my military identity card. The lieutenant glanced at the card and returned it to me saying:

---

55 Drożdżeński; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 29.

56 Morawski, Pytlakowski; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 104.

57 Testimony of Julian Chorążak, a locksmith; “Protokół rozprawy Najwyższego Sądu Wojskowego na sesji wyjazdowej w Kielcach przeciw Antoninie Biskupskiej i współoskarżonym”, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 163.

58 Morawski, Pytlakowski; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 104.

59 “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Ryszarda Sałaj”, July 24, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 214. A similar story regarding “citizen Pardoła” is told by Antoni Sałaj on July 5, 1946; quoted in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 117.

60 “Protokół rozprawy głównej przed Wojskowym Sądem Rejonowym w Kielcach”, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 287.

“there’s no mention of [your] religion here”. When the crowd started to press on me, I grabbed Lieutenant Marzęcki’s belt with both hands, entreating him to help me. The lieutenant threw my hands back in an effort to withdraw. [...] The crowd, seeing that the lieutenant is not helping me began to pull on my clothes ... A UB sergeant saved me from the hands of the crowd. Who was pulling my pants down I don’t know.<sup>61</sup>

Author Andrzej Drożdżeński describes a similar scene in his memoirs. ‘That’s a Jew!’, some men were said to have shouted, referring to a man in uniform.<sup>62</sup> The mob tells him to recite “Our Father” and sing *Kiedy ranne wstają zorze*, a religious hymn. A soldier cries: ‘I know him, he’s a Jew from UB (State Security). Hit him, but take off his uniform first.’<sup>63</sup> The mob starts the beating.

Both in the above descriptions and in the following cries, we can see recurring patterns of wartime behavior toward the Jews. In an example above, ‘some school kid’ demonstrated his cultural competence from the occupation period (‘Erlbaum is a Jewish name’). In the following, it is used by adults:

- ‘Jew, your [identity] documents’<sup>64</sup>
- ‘then I wanted to hide at Zieliński the baker’s, but he shouted: “get out!” and slammed the door in my face’ [Hersz Gutman’s testimony]<sup>65</sup>
- “‘you son of a bitch, take [your] shoes off!’ I took [my] shoes off’ [Mojżesz Cukier, a tailor, recounting a soldier’s or militiaman’s actions]<sup>66</sup>

---

61 “Protokół rozprawy głównej przed Wojskowym Sądem Rejonowym w Kielcach”, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 288.

62 Drożdżeński; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 30.

63 Drożdżeński; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 30. According to witness Sobański, the words “Do not tarnish the uniform” were allegedly uttered by an unknown boy scout, and the witness allegedly repeated them; “Protokół rozprawy głównej przed Wojskowym Sądem Rejonowym w Kielcach”, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 289.

64 Kalicki; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 86; see also Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 121. Cf. Władysław Sobczyński’s testimony from July 11, 1946: “Groups of civilians wandered around town searching for the Jews and checking documents,” quoted after Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 317.

65 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Hersza Gutmana”, July 5, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 121.

66 “Protokół przesłuchania Mojżesza Cukiera”, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, pp. 113–114.

- ‘we’ll murder you all, because Hitler didn’t murder you’ [Ewa Szuchman, a tailor residing at 7 Planty St. quoting a soldier]<sup>67</sup>
- ‘you had it coming, they should’ve wiped you all out’ [militiaman Marian Antonkiewicz to the wounded in the hospital, after they had been searched and robbed]<sup>68</sup>
- ‘and Hitler should have a golden monument raised in his honor, because he has taught us to beat the Jews!’<sup>69</sup>
- ‘since Hitler didn’t finish you off, we will finish you off’<sup>70</sup>
- ‘the Germans didn’t do away with you, so we will do away with you’ [militiaman Władysław Błachut to Ewa Szuchman]<sup>71</sup>
- ‘surrender all you got, surrender your dollars’ [a militiaman to Regina Fisz and Abram Moszkowicz]<sup>72</sup>
- ‘whack it’ [militiaman Mazur to a colleague about Regina Fisz’s child]<sup>73</sup>
- ‘Tkaczyk Adam observed that the defendant’s bayonet is covered with blood [...] and asked defendant Kołpacki [a WP soldier] why his bayonet was red, and Kołpacki replied: “I don’t know, I was in the square, and there was work,”<sup>74</sup> and when Tkaczyk admonished him [...] the defendant explained that a Jew

---

67 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Ewy Szuchman”, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 112.

68 “Wyrok Wojskowego Sądu Rejonowego w Kielcach w sprawie Mariana Antonkiewicza”, March 28, 1947, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 239. See also “Wyrok Wojskowego Sądu Rejonowego w sprawie Antoniego Apajewskiego, Czesława Chojnackiego, Stefana Palczyńskiego, Józefa Kanasa, Zenona Kołpackiego, Jana Pompy i Ludwika Nowaka” (all were Polish Army soldiers) from December 3, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, pp. 202–203.

69 Łoziński, *Materiały z filmu “Świadkowie”*, 17.

70 Testimony of Waclaw Ziółek from 26 April 1990; quoted after Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 114.

71 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Ewy Szuchman”, quoted in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 112.

72 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Abrama Moszkowicza”, July 6, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 119.

73 “Protokół rozprawy Najwyższego Sądu Wojskowego na sesji wyjazdowej w Kielcach przeciwko Antoninie Biskupskiej i współoskarżonym”, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 172.

74 “I have some work to do,” said Nowakowski, one of the killers of Regina Fisz and her little son. “The items [belonging to] that killed Jewess were taken by Nowakowski, among them: money, 17 dollars, and three rings.” “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Stefana Mazura”, July 7, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 132.

was lying [on the ground] still alive, in terrible pain, and I have a [sensitive?] conscience, so I can't look at [someone's] suffering, and I finished him off with a bayonet.<sup>75</sup>

- 'Nowakowski said that there was a Jewess and a Jew and the flat must be closed and we have to do our thing' [Stefan Mazur, a PPR/AL member, functionary at the militia station at 12 Sienkiewicza St.]<sup>76</sup>
- 'I took things from a Jewish home, because I saw that everyone was doing it and I supposed it was legal [...]'<sup>77</sup>
- 'When the caretaker asked who would pay her for all that, I told her: "everything is all right, you can take things because the Jews aren't coming back."<sup>78</sup>

Analogous wartime *skaz*<sup>79</sup> or idiom used when speaking to the Jews and about the Jews in postwar Poland appears in sources referring to the Kraków pogrom.

---

75 "Wyrok Wojskowego Sądu Rejonowego w sprawie Antoniego Apajewskiego, Czesława Chojnackiego, Stefana Palczyńskiego, Józefa Kanasa, Zenona Kołpackiego, Jana Pompy i Ludwika Nowaka", (all Polish Army soldiers) from December 3, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 203.

76 "Protokół rozprawy Najwyższego Sądu Wojskowego na sesji wyjazdowej w Kielcach przeciw Antoninie Biskupskiej i współoskarżonym", July 9, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 170.

77 "Protokół przesłuchania Eugeniusza Krawczyka, Kielce", July 27, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 130. "Krawczyk Eugeniusz [aged 15, referred to in the sentencing document as an 'MO functionary'], a liaison at the WKMO in Kielce [...] ran to 7 Planty St, where he pushed his way through a crowd of people, put 5 kg of rice, 2 shirts, 2 towels, 7 packs of tea, 1 pair of underwear, a blanket, a shaver, some dried apricots and walnuts in a suitcase he had found. Having packed it into the suitcase, he carried [it] to Sienkiewicza St, entered a shop, sold the rice, the tea, and the apricots for 1,150 złotych. At the market, he sold one towel for 30 złotych to a random trader, and exchanged the other one for a bottle of lemonade and a cigarette. He took the rest of the things to the barracks, and sold the shaver. Having returned to the market, he noticed some militiamen leading a man of Jewish origin, whom he hit [...]" after Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 250.

78 "Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Stefana Mazura", July 7, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 132.

79 *Skaz* (Rus.), which carries the "forgotten voice of those times" is a term used by Henryk Grynberg to describe Bohdan Wojdowski's writing; Grynberg, Henryk: *Prawda nieartystyczna*. Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy: Warsaw 1994, p. 263. Grynberg has borrowed this term from Russian folklore studies; see Tokarska-Bakir, Joanna: "Skaz antysemityzmu". *Teksty Drugie* 1–2, 2009, pp. 302–317.

One of the most active pogrom participants was the caretaker of the shelter at 26 Miodowa St., Kazimierz Bandys.<sup>80</sup> Of the two of his cries, one refers to the blood libel legend ('you are on Polish soil and still you murder Polish children')<sup>81</sup> and the other one is a threat ('you old whores, if Hitler couldn't finish you all off, we will')<sup>82</sup>. During the pogrom, Bandys behaves like a man going into regression. He reverts to the occupation period behavior patterns: hunting for the Jews and looting (*szaber*). When interrogated, he says:

[...] [the soldiers] asked me to help them with looking for Jews ... I said I wanted high boots, but he [a Jew called Ptasznik] did not want to give them [to me] and only with a soldier's help did we [manage to] force him to take them off. Those boots I took for myself, they are the ones I'm wearing [...] I was holding a revolver and an axe.<sup>83</sup>

At the climax of the Kraków pogrom, 'the interior of the [Kupa] synagogue was burned down, and the perpetrators took the Torah scrolls out into the street, put them in a heap, which was set on fire according to the German method.'<sup>84</sup>

## Re 1 and 2: Crowd growth and equality

Thus far, we have discussed the direction and the density of the pogrom mass. Another one of its tendencies is constant growth. The cries below, produced by the Kraków mob, allow us to determine the function that the threats directed at the Jews had in the growth and self-organization of the mob:

- 'we'll cut all your heads off' [4 militiamen and civilians to Jews in the shelter in Miodowa St.]
- 'shut up or I'll cut your head off' [a militiaman to a resident of the shelter]<sup>85</sup>

---

80 According to the indictment, he had contacts with NSZ [*Narodowe Siły Zbrojne*, National Armed Forces]; after Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 75 (footnote 27 with a quote from the indictment).

81 After id., p. 206.

82 Ibid.

83 "Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Franciszka Bandysa w WUBP", August 15, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 163.

84 "Sprawozdanie CKŻP o zajściach antyżydowskich w Krakowie w sobotę dnia 11 sierpnia 1945", in Kwiek, Julian: "Wydarzenia antyżydowskie 11 sierpnia 1945 w Krakowie". *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów* 1(193), 2000; also Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 88.

85 Witness statements of Sara Stern and Renata Hiller at the Jewish Committee from 13 August 1945; after Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 140.

- ‘we will prevail over you all’<sup>86</sup>
- ‘that railroad worker cried that they will be shooting a Jew’ [a Soviet soldier who saved Hilel Kleiner’s life]<sup>87</sup>
- ‘we’re from AK, there are eighteen of us armed, we’ll kill you all’ [militiamen and other attackers, breaking into a Jewish shop]<sup>88</sup>
- ‘they want communism, so I’ll give them communism’ [militiamen]<sup>89</sup>
- ‘Jews are Bolsheviks’ [militiamen]<sup>90</sup>
- ‘enough of our blood’ [militiamen]<sup>91</sup>

The Rzeszów mob organized itself in a similar manner:

- ‘beat the Jews!’<sup>92</sup>
- ‘kill them, stone them!’<sup>93</sup>
- ‘the Germans didn’t finish you off, we will!’<sup>94</sup>

And the Kielce mob likewise organized itself in this manner:

[testimony of Edward Jurkowski, a musician]

I drank a quarter of a liter of vodka and had something to eat and, somewhat tipsy, I too joined the crowd, and also shouted that we must murder the Jews, if they murder our people, and shouted, ‘forward, men.’ I was also standing next to a WP ensign and shouted at him that if he’s a hero, he should go and beat the Jews. I was running around like crazy among the people and kept shouting that Jews had to be beaten. On the way

---

86 “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Franciszka Bandysa w MUBP”, August 11, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 138.

87 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka, Ilji Chorowoja [Red Army soldier]”, August 11, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 134.

88 After Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 194 and “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Franciszka Kucharskiego w WUBP”, August 30, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 79.

89 “Postanowienie o pociągnięciu do odpowiedzialności karnej sierżanta Jedynowicza Stanisława”, August 22, 1945, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 83.

90 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Hilela Kleinera”; after: Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie* p. 82.

91 Ibid.

92 “Protokół zeznania świadka Leiba Kaplana w sprawie wypadków w mieście Rzeszowie”, in Kaczmarowski, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 76.

93 “Sprawozdanie z przebiegu zajść antyżydowskich”, in Kaczmarowski, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 93.

94 “Sprawozdanie w sprawie wypadków zaszłych ...”, in Kaczmarowski, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 102.

with the crowd I kept telling people that we should go and see, and even if 20 or 30 of us fall, we should show that we can fight.<sup>95</sup>

The growth of the mob is combined with a radical equality established within it. Although it signifies the loss of individuality,<sup>96</sup> in return the individuals are infected with a feeling of the mob's power, combined with an impression of merging into something larger than oneself, which at the same time frees them from any responsibility. At the expense of submission, every member of the collective takes on the mob's attributes: its infallibility, fearlessness, and inviolability. Precisely for this reason, the collective identity of the pogrom crowd is attractive to the onlookers and the security forces.

This is not the only cause of the mutual attraction between those groups. As we know, in Kielce, Kraków and Rzeszów, the affinity between the security forces and the mob prevented the former from doing their job. The unfolding of this process is apparent from the documents about the Kielce pogrom. In the cries of the mob gathered at 7 Planty St., there gradually emerges an alliance of the militia and the army with the mob.

- [mob to soldiers]: 'Finish the Jews off'<sup>97</sup>
- 'Having approached the door, one of the gendarmes hit a Jew, which raised a storm of applause and the cry: "Long live our army!"'<sup>98</sup>
- 'Long live our army and MO!'<sup>99</sup>

---

95 "Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Edwarda Jurkowskiego", July 5, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, pp. 122–123.

96 Freud, Sigmund / Reszke, Robert (transl.): "Psychologia zbiorowości i analiza ja". In: id.: *Pisma społeczne*. KR: Warsaw 1998, p. 74.

97 "Protokół przesłuchania oficera Informacji WP Józefa Lewartowskiego", January 6, 1994, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 234.

98 "Raport funkcjonariusza PUBP w Kielcach Henryka Rybaka do szefa PUBP", July 4, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 150. "The soldiers were walking around the entire square and the street, mixing with the instigated crowd and ultimately yielded to the crowd's agitation, e.g. a soldier hitting a Jew in the face stirred great enthusiasm among the crowd, which shouted: 'Long live the Polish Army!'" from "Raport Jana Jurkowskiego i Henryka Gutowskiego, pracowników Departamentu II MBP, będących na wyjeździe służbowym w Kielcach 4/7/1945 dla Ministra BP, Radkiewiczza", in Blus-Węgrowa, *Pogrom kielecki*, pp. 62–63.

99 "Sprawozdanie zastępcy szefa PUBP Alberta Grynbauma z przebiegu zajęć antysemitycznych w Kielcach", Kielce July 6, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 117.



- ‘Bravo militia!’<sup>100</sup>
- ‘The people shouted: “Long live the Polish Army!”, although there were many militiamen among the troops, and then one could notice satisfaction among the soldiers and great zeal in dragging out the Jews’<sup>101</sup>
- ‘I didn’t react because I saw that besides civilians, MO functionaries and soldiers are also involved in the murder, and I didn’t want to undermine the favorable opinion the army and MO held with the mob, which shouted “Long live the Polish Army!”, “Soldiers, beat the Jews for our children!”’ [a militiaman].<sup>102</sup>

The cries demonstrate that the anti-Jewish alliance is based on the *Wirbewusstsein*, the worldview unity of both groups, virtually undistinguishable, if we take into consideration what we know about the circumstances of recruitment into the militia and the army.<sup>103</sup> Both formations were not only ‘ready to believe the rumors about murders of children committed by the Jews,’<sup>104</sup> but the militia men and the soldiers were certain that they had been brought in to defend the murderers of children.<sup>105</sup> The analysis of trial documents, memoirs, and witness statements leads to a conclusion that at the scene of the pogrom in Planty St., one

---

100 “Protokół przesłuchania w WUBP świadka Jury Mojżesza”, July 6, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 159–160.

101 “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Ryszarda Sałapy”, July 25, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, pp. 218–219.

102 Ibid.

103 Zaremba, “Mit mordu rytualnego”, pp. 96, 100, 102, 107 etc. Majer, Piotr: *Milicja Obywatelska 1944–1957: geneza, organizacja, działalność, miejsce w aparacie władzy*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego: Olsztyn 2004, pp. 23–272.

104 Kersten, Krystyna: *Pisma rozproszone*. Szarota, Tomasz / Libionka, Dariusz (eds.) Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek: Toruń 2006, p. 290. See also “Sprawozdanie instruktorów KC PPR z pobytu w woj. kieleckim w czasie od 4 do 15 lipca 1946” in Meducki, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie II*, p. 137: “The militia and the army were not under control. Instead of quelling the riot, they mixed with the crowd and yielded to the influence of the crowd.”

“[D]emands were made to withdraw the army and MO, which had identified with the agitated crowd,” after Meducki, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie II*, p. 149. See also Blus-Węgrowa, *Pogrom kielecki*, pp. 62–63.

105 “But the greatest influence on the course of the pogrom was the mindset of the militiamen and soldiers sent to defend; the conviction that they had been ordered to defend the Jews who had murdered Polish children,” Kersten, *Pisma rozproszone*, p. 276.

could hardly find anyone able to resist the hypnotic influence of this fantasy.<sup>106</sup> If such a group did exist, it was composed of those whom the rumor was threatening. They might have been Jews or – to use Krzysztof Kaczmarek's peculiar term – “Soviets”.<sup>107</sup> The Jews did not believe the blood libel legend because they were perfectly aware of its function and its manifestations. The “Soviets” (who included communists of various ethnic backgrounds, particularly those who had spent the war in the Soviet Union) had been subjected to atheist indoctrination, which might have undermined their established religious belief in the veracity of the blood libel legend. But not all of them benefited from the indoctrination: the fear of Jews, which had for centuries been part of the education of Polish children, was too strong.<sup>108</sup> Also some of the Kuybyshev NKVD school graduates did

---

106 The particle “niby” [supposedly] or the adverb “rzekomo” [allegedly], appear very seldom in interrogation transcripts; see the statement of Albert Grynbaum, an employee of the Kielce WUBP: “I heard that the Jews had supposedly killed Polish children,” from “Protokół przesłuchania świadka ppor. Alberta Grynbauma, pracownika PUBP w Kielcach”, August 2, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 342. This particle is not to be found in a number of statements in which we would expect to find it, e.g. in the account of Kazimierz Golczewski, who was a prosecutor in Kielce: “I don't remember [...] if I have already heard at the time [...] that a child had been detained by the Jews in the basement of a house in Planty St, to use his blood to ‘make matzah.’ The child survived, I don't remember how. This, as I remember, was the cause of those incidents.” “Protokół przesłuchania prokuratora WPR w Kielcach, Kazimierza Golczewskiego”, March 10, 1992, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 243. See also “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Władysława Sobczyńskiego”, August 7, 1946: “Kuźnicki replied that one would have to examine what the matter looks like, because they did have information that the Jews had killed [someone],” after: Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 322.

107 See Kaczmarek, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 35.

108 “To children of kindergarten age [...] in the villages, towns and suburbs, the word ‘Jew’ brought associations of a man in a black gabardine stretching to the ground, in a black hat or cap, with a sack on his back, and an obligatory cane or umbrella in his hand. The cane, or rather a kind of stick, was sometimes used by this black[-clad] man to chase away dogs, which were particularly fierce toward him [...] When such a figure appeared, a shout was usually heard: ‘There goes a Jew with a sack!’, to which shout groups of children vanished from the streets like frightened sparrows. [...] How many times have I heard it said to me or to others: ‘You’ll see! A Jew will kidnap you and put you in a sack.’ Or: ‘You’ll see, I’ll sell you to a Jew, and he’ll put you in a sack.’” Kotula, Franciszek: *Tamten Rzeszów czyli wędrówka po zakątkach i historii miasta*. Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza: Rzeszów 1985, p. 379.

not want to cease to be those “children“, especially since the Jews stood in their way to better communist posts.

This can best be exemplified by an excerpt from a report written three days after the pogrom by a Rzeszów militiaman Michał Kołacz,<sup>109</sup> a graduate of the Kuybyshev NKVD school:

It is to the great disgrace of the government, what impression it makes and what the attitude of the population is in a free, independent and democratic Poland, where the government above all privileges the Jews, perpetual exploiters, capitalists, persecutors of the faith in Christ, murderers of the Polish nation.<sup>110</sup>

Kołacz’ statement combines three versions of the Bloodsucker figure discussed in the previous chapter: left-wing, religious and national. The report continues in this vein, thus attesting to the failure of the communist instruction, and demonstrating the palpability of the fear that the Jews were inspiring:

Anger and hatred for Jews continue to be felt among the civilian population, in connection with the detected murder. [...] The Security say it is just one girl, but where are all the other missing children, women from the country, who had gone into town with provisions and disappeared without a trace. How come there were human skulls there, clothes, shoes that still had feet in them. There’s no way such a thing will be hushed up, this terrible massacre of Polish children and the making of sausages, several kilograms of which were also found in the chimney. They say it should be in every Pole’s interest and he should avenge the innocent Polish children. [...] They say that the [State] Security is leaking provocations, blaming it on Hitler’s fascists [sic], but they are thoroughly mistaken and they should stop fooling around because even during occupation [even] the worst of the Nazi enemies did not torment Poles so much when killing them, because he asked him to lie down and then he shot him from the back, and they [the Jews] cut the head off when [the person is] still alive, gouge the eyes out, cut the veins, and the person slowly expires, it is very brutal, and if the matter goes unpunished, it will just make things worse, will cause unrest among the population and lead to civil war.<sup>111</sup>

The image of feet protruding out of the shoes belonging to the kidnapped children and women, along with the “sausage version of the blood libel legend” included in this account give Kołacz’s report a distinctly plebeian, Rabelaisian character. Unlike in Rabelais however, these images are not ironic: they represent the literalization of metaphor, or – to use Hanna Segal’s term<sup>112</sup> – a symbolic

---

109 See a biographical entry in Kaczmarek, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 69.

110 “Raport sytuacyjny Michała Kołacza”, June 14, 1945, in Kaczmarek, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 81.

111 Kaczmarek, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 81.

112 See Chapter 6 in this volume.

equation, which could have fatal consequences in Poland. In another one of Kołacz' reports, written on the second day of the Rzeszów pogrom, the figure of Bloodsucker undergoes a similar transformation, manifesting itself in a particular Jew – a militiaman.

I personally know one woman who has a Jewish tenant – a militiaman. This Jew said that he had come to Poland in order to spill Polish blood.<sup>113</sup>

The alliance between the militia, the army and the people (mob equality) is sealed by the following assurances of Kielce soldiers: 'Don't be afraid, we won't shoot at our own people.'<sup>114</sup> The extent to which the people's regime amalgamated with the "people" is demonstrated in another statement, also from Kielce:

[...] the militiamen from the MO precinct in Sienkiewicza St. were the worst. They walked between the civilians in the crowd, saying: "Poles, don't be afraid". One of the soldiers shouted that he had seen 4 dead children in lime, and a militiaman by the entrance to the house shouted that his child was dead and was in that house.<sup>115</sup>

That is what witness Zbigniew Niewiarowski says about the early stages of the incident:

At the beginning of the incident, the building was actually guarded by MO functionaries. But this did not last long, because the Kielce municipal commander, Markiewicz, who was on the spot when the crowd, instigated by various dark elements, was shouting and yelling: "Let us in, and we'll deal with them", while giving out various cries: "Down

---

113 Kaczmarek, *Pogrom którego nie było*, p. 70.

114 "Relacja kanclerza Kurii Diecezjalnej Kieleckiej ks. Henryka Peszko na temat pogromu kieleckiego, 1981", in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, pp. 210–211. Jerzy Daniel (*Żyd w zielonym kapeluszu. Rzecz o pogromie 4 lipca 1946*. Scriptum: Kielce 1996, p. 78) noted a characteristic interpretation of the issue in a proclamation signed by the Kielce Province Governor Eugeniusz Wiślicz-Iwańczyk and Bishop Czesław Kaczmarek: "Not a shot was fired at the people [i.e. at non-Jews]." For a comment, see Gross, *Strach*, p. 189.

115 "Raport funkcjonariusza PUBP w Kielcach Henryka Rybaka do szefa PUBP", July 4, 1946, quoted in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 151. Similar false testimonies were given by soldiers in Kraków. A report by Soviet security services informs about the following incident with the involvement of the militia: "[T]hey introduced themselves as soldiers of the Kraków Military District and gave their names: Wasilewski Jan, Perek Tadeusz, and Gacek Roman. They stated that they had witnessed the four Jews they had brought in murder Polish children in the synagogue," Siemowit Kriwienko, "Raporty z Polski". *Karta* 15, 1995, pp. 31–32; "30/08/1945, Soobszczenije Seliwanowskowgo NKWD SSSR Berija", p. 98 (336–337a), in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 73.

with the Jewish lackeys”, “Long live our army”, “Down with the Russian [state] security, which protects the Jews”, etc. Major Markiewicz, issuing no orders, roamed around among the crowd, and later told the mob: “Come on, go inside and see for yourselves, and search everywhere”.<sup>116</sup>

Other witnesses also state:

[...] defendant Furman [an MO functionary] was instigating the crowd, shouting: “Look for the children!”<sup>117</sup>

Some of the accounts show that the attack on the Jewish shelter was carried out jointly by the militia and the army.<sup>118</sup> It was accompanied by gunshots from the mob standing outside the building, interpreted as Jews’ defending themselves with firearms.<sup>119</sup> This is reflected in the following cries:

---

116 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Zbigniewa Niewiarowskiego”, July 5, 1945, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 113.

117 “Postanowienie Najwyższego Sądu Wojskowego w sprawie skarg i wniosku rewizyjnego na wyrok uniewinniający Jana Rogozińskiego, Ludwika Pustułę i Franciszka Furmana”, March 12, 1947, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, pp. 250–251.

118 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Zbigniewa Niewiarowskiego”, July 5, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 116.

119 This was testified to by Franciszek Jonkisz: “[T]he crowd gathered outside the Provincial Jewish Committee at 7 Planty St. was throwing the Jewish people living at 7 Planty St. out of the windows, of the mezzanine, while others, shouting that the Jews with grenades and automatic weapons were getting ready for a fight with the people gathered outside the building, were immediately killing the Jews that had been thrown out. Personally I can state, which is in concordance with facts, that from the building, i.e. on the part of the Jewish population, there were no shots, and most shots came from MO and the army,” from “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Franciszka Jonkisz”, July 7, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 115.

See a contradictory second-hand account in the testimony of the Kielce Province Governor, E. Wiślicz- Iwańczyk, quoted in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 273. On the subject of Jews firing shots see also the testimony of Ryszard Sałapa: “Witnessing the raging crowd murdering Jews, I was so excited that I considered it a kind of honor, telling Wróbel that I was still in the building and next to me they were shooting at the Jews lying in bed, and on the other hand saying that the Jews also were shooting at us,” from “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Ryszarda Sałapy”, July 25, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, pp. 218–219.

A similar rumor triggered a wave of violence during the Kraków pogrom. The shooting was interpreted according to individual views on the nature of the clashes. The

- ‘Gentlemen! The Jews killed a Polish officer!’ [a civilian fleeing from 7 Planty St.]<sup>120</sup>
- ‘The Jews killed your lieutenant, beat them’ [women to WP soldiers]<sup>121</sup>
- ‘[militiaman Szymkiewicz] told me to shoot a kneeling Jewess. When I replied that she had done nothing and I wouldn’t shoot her, defendant Szymkiewicz told me that I was not a good Pole, and added that the “whore” had shot a Polish officer.’<sup>122</sup>

The turning point in the Kielce pogrom was probably the moment when the militia and the army began fighting with the Public Security forces,<sup>123</sup> possibly deployed in order to cause the withdrawal of the militia, whose appearance in the “Jewish home” in order to carry out a search constituted a spark that set off the pogrom.<sup>124</sup> Pogrom cries enable us to reconstruct this process. The mob stands in defense of MO against UB.<sup>125</sup> From mere exhortations of ‘beat the Jews’ (at around 9 o’clock,<sup>126</sup> also at 12.30<sup>127</sup>), it moves to an attack on the ‘UB men,’ identified as ‘defenders of Jews’.

---

Jewish Press Agency informed that the army and the militia had been fired at twice, without specifying by whom. NKVD claimed that soldiers had fired a few shots for the sake of provocation, although there were rumors that it was the Jews that had fired the weapons. Among those who believed that the Jews were to blame, the dominant view was that the Jews had fired shots from the rooftop. The news echo the Grodno *Wandersagen* of 1920, September 1939 and August 1944, mentions shooting together with the pouring of hot water or hot vinegar (see Chapter 6: *The Figure of Bloodsucker in Polish religious, national and left-wing discourse in the years 1945/1946* in this volume). According to WiN sources, the Jews were to have fired from pistols or even a heavy machine gun from the neighboring houses.

120 Drożdżeński; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 28.

121 “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Tadeusza Lisa”, Kielce, July 4, 1946, quoted in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 116.

122 Testimony of Bronisław Tchórz in “Protokół rozprawy głównej przed Wojskowym Sądem Rejonowym w Kielcach”, quoted in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 285.

123 Antoni Kręgliński’s statement: “The crowd began to gather during the clash between the UB functionaries and the militiamen,” Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 121.

124 On animosities or even hostility between the militia and UB in 1944–1946, see e.g. Majer, *Milicja Obywatelska 1944–1957*, pp. 60–75. Also Blus-Węgrowska, *Pogrom kielecki*, p. 57, etc.

125 Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 452.

126 Kalicki; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 69.

127 Kalicki; *ibid.*, p. 80.

Whoever stands in their defense becomes threatened as well:

- ‘what, you’re defending the UB men?’<sup>128</sup>
- ‘security men, Jewish lackeys, they defend Jews’<sup>129</sup>
- ‘Jewish lackeys gave weapons to the Jews, but we’ll take them away and murder the Jews’<sup>130</sup>
- ‘In a conversation with one woman [...] in which the woman said that a couple of days earlier those Jews had murdered some Polish children, so I asked whether she had actually seen it, and precisely at that time a Polish captain standing by turned to me with these words: “[You] Jewish lackey, I’ll shoot you in the head,” then he kicked me and called the soldiers to take me away, but I was already gone’ [Czesław Konarski, a Kielce WUBP functionary]<sup>131</sup>

Whoever defends the enemy becomes an enemy himself (cries of the Kraków mob):

- ‘Fuck you, you side with the Jews’ [a militia man to a PUBP employee]<sup>132</sup>
- ‘They defend the Jews, and only Jews do that’ [a militiaman, a WP sergeant]<sup>133</sup>

The same is apparent from the following cries that “thicken” the Kielce mob. They contain segregation syllogisms:

- ‘he defends the Jews because he’s a Jew himself’ [the mob about Jurkowski, a UB agent]<sup>134</sup>
- ‘all Jews are *ubowce* [UB employees]’<sup>135</sup>

---

128 Drożdżeński; *ibid.*, p. 28.

129 “Zeznanie kpt. Jana Muchy, kierownika Wydziału II PUBP w Kielcach”, August 3, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 351.

130 Testimony of Zdzisław Sitek in “Protokół rozprawy Najwyższego Sądu Wojskowego na sesji wyjazdowej w Kielcach przeciw Antoninie Biskupskiej i współoskarżonym”, July 9, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 250.

131 “Protokół przesłuchania Czesława Konarskiego”, Kielce, July 4, 1946, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego II*, p. 122.

132 “Zeznanie współpracownika MUBP Edmunda Łukawieckiego o zachowaniu milicjanta Kucharskiego”, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 136.

133 Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 83. See also “Akt oskarżenia przeciwko 25 uczestnikom pogromu w dniu 11 sierpnia”, in *ibid.*, p. 214.

134 “Protokół przesłuchania funkcjonariusza Departamentu III MBP Henryka Gutowskiego”, August 9, 1996, in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 386.

135 Drożdżeński; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 28.

- ‘The Jews are UB. UB are the Jews’<sup>136</sup>
- ‘Jews are Bolsheviks’<sup>137</sup>

The mob shifts its aggression from UB onto other institutions, such as the ‘Jewish government’:

- ‘Poland is ruled by Jews!’<sup>138</sup>
- ‘Down with the Jewish government!’<sup>139</sup>
- ‘All this is happening because we have a Judeocommunist dictatorship!’<sup>140</sup>
- ‘Down with the Jews! Down with the Jewish troops!’<sup>141</sup>
- ‘Beat the Jews, we have a Jewish-Russian government, but we don’t have a Polish one, down with the Jewish threat’<sup>142</sup>
- ‘they want communism, so I’ll show them communism’<sup>143</sup>

In this context, the statement of Stanisław Rurarz – a mentally challenged person – is symbolic:

[...] some woman said that we had three governments: Polish, Russian, and Jewish. Perhaps I said quite unwittingly in the street that there were three governments: Polish, Russian, and Jewish. The passers-by were asking me what that meant, and I replied that I didn’t know. I explained that it had just crossed my mind then, and that’s why I shouted that.<sup>144</sup>

---

136 Nurowska; Więcek, *Zabić Żyda!*, p. 60.

137 Kraków, “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Hilela Kleinerja”, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 82.

138 Kielce, “Protokół przesłuchania świadka Jana Mańturza”, July 7, 1945, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 116.

139 Kielce, “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanej Antoniny Biskupskiej”, July 5, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 131.

140 “Raport funkcjonariusza PUBP w Kielcach Henryka Rybaka do szefa PUBP”, July 4, 1946, quoted in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 150.

141 Kielce, “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanej Antoniny Biskupskiej”, July 5, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 131.

142 “Raport funkcjonariusza PUBP w Kielcach Henryka Rybaka do szefa PUBP”, 4/7/1946, quoted in Żaryn and Kamiński, *Wokół pogromu kieleckiego I*, p. 150.

143 Kraków, “Postanowienie o pociągnięciu do odpowiedzialności karnej sierżanta Jedynowicza Stanisława z dn. 22/8/1945”, in Cichopek, *Pogrom Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 83.

144 Earlier: “I can explain that the blood on my clothes came by splashing off on me from the Jew [beaten],” from “Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Stanisława Rurarza”, July 5, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, pp. 124–127.



This testimony can be dismissed in the same manner as one discredits the testimonies of drunken people or children. While twisting facts, the statements of people like Rurarz nevertheless truly reflect the sick logic of a society and its paranoid schemata.<sup>145</sup> Another one of Rurarz' statements even more clearly expresses the concept of "vengeance"<sup>146</sup> as an aberrational rendering of revenge for a *non-event*. From the linguistic point of view, a better example of projectional inversion can hardly be found:

I was showing [that] to people, saying: 'blood stains on [my] jacket and trousers,' expressing that it was the blood [spilled to] avenge the murdered Polish children. The blood spurted from the Jew I was beating.<sup>147</sup>

Although it declares itself against the Judeocommunism, the crowd – be it in Kielce, Rzeszów or Kraków – for the most part refrains from crossing the line and instigating a real anti-communist guerrilla. The primary objects of assault are the Jews. Even though the mob is "nationally inspired", the cries sometimes contain left-wing overtones. They are accepted as long as they are legitimized by being antisemitic. This can be illustrated with the cries quoted by two witnesses, Janina Safian and Edward Brandenburg:

In the crowd there was an individual [Stefan Franczak of Ostrowiec<sup>148</sup>] who shouted: "Beat the Jews! Murder the Jews!" [...] The individual further shouted that the PPR didn't want the Jews and said that the following day he would be in jail for this. She further adds that she heard the individual shout: "Long live the PPR!"<sup>149</sup>

---

145 Girard, René: *Des choses cachées depuis la fondation du monde. Recherches avec Jean -Michel Oughourlian et Guy Lefort*. Grasset: Paris 1978, p. 171.

146 See Tokarska-Bakir, *Legendy o krwi*, p. 579 ff.

147 Testimony of Stanisław Rurarz in "Protokół rozprawy Najwyższego Sądu Wojskowego na sesji wyjazdowej w Kielcach przeciw Antoninie Biskupskiej i współoskarżonym", July 9, 1946, in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 166.

148 See a short biography in "Protokół rozprawy głównej przed Wojskowym Sądem Rejonowym w Kielcach", quoted in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 263.

149 Testimony of Janina Safian, corroborated by Edward Brandenburg in "Protokół rozprawy głównej przed Wojskowym Sądem Rejonowym w Kielcach", in Meducki and Wrona, *Antyżydowskie wydarzenia kieleckie I*, p. 285. Another form of cries: "Down with the Jews! We don't want Jews in Poland! Death to the PPR men! Long live Sanation Poland!" is cited by Stanisław Rurarz, quoted after Blus-Węgrowa, *Pogrom kielecki*, p. 86.

## Conclusions

This text combines a case study (a comparative analysis of three pogroms) with a methodological study (anthropology of performance). The combination of these elements allows us to formulate preliminary hypotheses and point out the direction for further research.

A preliminary analysis of pogrom cries shows structural similarities between the three collectives in question. What has been referred to as conspiracy theories (the sequence: rumor about a child murdered “for blood” – aggression of the mob endeavoring to punish the perpetrators – attempt made by security forces to control it – decomposition of those forces, which in part join the mob) is in essence a spontaneous process, whose repetitive character suggests that pogrom crowds enacted conflicts around the emergent postwar state authorities, including conflicts within the communist milieu, characterized by a growing hostility between communists of Jewish and non-Jewish origin.

On the one hand, the pogrom crowds *performed* the wartime past – the killing of Jews and the plundering of their property by the Poles that accompanied the Holocaust – and on the other hand, they tried to prevent the anticipated future connected with a sudden change of the status of the Jews after the war.

This chapter was based on Elias Canetti’s concept of the crowd as a mass striving for unrestrained growth and homogenization. The next chapter describes the pogroms using a somewhat different theory, which postulates that homogenization is but a mask worn by social dramas which take an exceptionally violent course.