

Summary of doctoral dissertation

Alicja Maślak-Maciejewska, *On the history of Judaism in 19th century Krakow – identity, religious views and the institutions of the milieu of progressive Jews.*

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The milieu of progressive Jews (also called reformers and liberals) existed in Krakow since the 1840s until the outbreak of the Second World War (in this dissertation only the period until the end of the 19th century is analyzed). Krakow's progressives, similarly to the progressive Jews in other cities, were organized in an association and had their own synagogue, Tempel. The aim of this dissertation is to describe this milieu in three main aspects – institutional, religious and connected to the social, religious and national self-identification of progressives.

The framework for the activities of the progressives was set by the Association which was formed in 1843. In this dissertation the following aspects connected to its functioning are analyzed: finances, structure, authorities, its statutes (from 1843, 1864 and 1895) and also its social composition and size (chap. 2). Also described are other organizations, mainly charitable and cultural, which had institutional bounds with the progressive association, were supported by it and which, at the same time, constitute a visible sign of the influences of the Progressive Association in Krakow and outside its borders (chap. 8).

One of the main objectives of the Progressive Association was to maintain its own prayer-house (since 1862, Tempel synagogue), in which the services were held according to the religious needs of progressives (chap. 5). In spite of their attachment to tradition, progressives wished to participate in the modern religious service, in which an emphasis was placed on decorum and which included, as its central part, a sermon. The sermon, initially in German and, after the late 1860s, in Polish, was delivered by a preacher who had both secular and a religious training (preferably received in the modern rabbinical seminary). This dissertation analyzes the role played by preachers in the progressive milieu and the expectations of their service (chap. 4). Described are the activities of successive Krakow's preachers: I. Miseses, G. Kranz, S. Dankowicz, M. Duschak, S. Landau. An emphasis was put on the instruction they received, on their religious views and on the network of their acquaintances with other religious leaders (chap. 5).

The Krakow Progressive Association developed at a crossroads of influences originating in several centers and it merged them in a syncretic way. The ideas of the Positive-Historical Judaism were brought to Krakow from Wroclaw and the Jewish Theological Seminary in that city, the Vienna rite was brought from Vienna and Prague; the ideas of Polish patriotism came to Krakow from other progressive synagogues in Polish lands, especially from Warsaw. In regards to religious views, Krakow's progressives identified themselves with the ideas of so-called "moderate reform" and they rejected the German Reform. In the matter of their national self-identification, they above all felt like Jews and fostered this identity. Simultaneously they were loyal to the state (which in the words of the prayer for the monarch included in the synagogue service) and manifested their Polish patriotism through festive celebrations organized on the occasion of Polish national anniversaries (chap. 7).

This dissertation fills a gap in research on the history of Judaism in Krakow (the progressive milieu has never been studied in full, and existing literature pertains to the period until 1874), on the history of Jews in this city and on the history of progressive Judaism in Polish lands.

