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## ZOFIA NAŁKOWSKA AND LIBERALS OF KIELCE

The Revolution of 1905-1907 roused a group of liberal intelligence to action in different regions of the country. On their initiative the provincial, democratic-liberal press was created. Its purpose was to fight against the ignorance and backwardness.

During the revolutionary political revival and growth of interest in the press the new titles such as “Kurier Kielecki” and “Echa Kieleckie” began to appear in Kielce.<sup>1</sup> The latter was devoted – as subheading ran – “political, social, economic, and literature issues”. “Echa Kieleckie” was founded by Marian Świącki and printed in his father’s Stanisław printing house at 37 Bodzentyńska Street.<sup>2</sup> “Echa Kieleckie” appeared for a relatively short period of time, i.e. since 13<sup>th</sup> October 1906 till 21<sup>st</sup> December 1907.<sup>3</sup> The newspaper was financed by wealthy representatives of liberal intelligence in Kielce: printer Stanisław Świącki, dentist Stefan Papiński and engineer Aleksander Kossuth.<sup>4</sup> They were all members of Związek Postępowo-Demokratyczny (the Liberal-Democratic Association).<sup>5</sup> As a “responsible editor” the newspaper was signed by

<sup>1</sup> B. Szabat, *Echa Kieleckie*, “Przemiany”, no. 5, 1971, p. 28; M. Adamczyk, *Prasa Kielecczyzny – tradycje i współczesność*, Warsaw 1987, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> R. Wrońska-Gorzowska, E. Gorzkowski, *Album kielecki. Starówka*, Kielce 1994, p. 52; J. Rutkowski, *Leon Rygier jako kierownik literacki i publicysta “Ech Kieleckich”*, “Studia Kieleckie”, no. 2, 1975, p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> M. Adamczyk, *Cztery epoki prasy Kielecczyzny 1811-1956*, Cracow 1990, p. 28; since 13<sup>th</sup> October 1906 till 20<sup>th</sup> April 1907, “Echa Kieleckie” was a weekly newspaper (it was published on Saturday). Since 27<sup>th</sup> April till 26<sup>th</sup> June 1907 the newspaper was published twice a week. Saturday’s issue usually consisted of 12, 14 or 16 pages, Wednesday’s issue was slimmer (usually 4 pages). 11 issues of “Echa Kieleckie” were published in 1906, 61 issues in 1907. The amount of circulation – 500 copies. On October 1908, because of the fortieth anniversary of social, cultural and literary work of Aleksander Świętochowski, one-day issue titled “Echa Kieleckie” appeared (the same typographic format as the newspaper). It was signed by Marian Świącki as publisher and responsible editor, and edited by a committee composed of: S. A. Dobrzański, F. Loeffler, A. Wolman.

<sup>4</sup> A. Morąg, B. Szabat, *Kossuth Aleksander*, [in:] *Świętokrzyski Słownik Biograficzny* (further: ŚSB), vol. 2, ed. J. Szczepański, Kielce 2009, p. 248; W. Obara, B. Szabat, *Świącki Stanisław*, [in:] *ibidem*, p. 463.

<sup>5</sup> S. Kossuth, *Wspomnienia kieleckie*, [in:] State Archives in Kielce (further: APK), Rado-stowa, sig. 15, p. 11; L. Kowalczyk-Mroczkowska, *Rola postępowej inteligencji w kształtowaniu poglądów miejscowego społeczeństwa poprzez książkę i czasopismo w latach 1905-1915*, “Rocznik Świętokrzyski”, vol. 16, 1989, p.204.

Marian Świącki<sup>6</sup> from Kielce, but the actual editor and a leading ideologist was acting officially as “literary manager” – Leon Rygier, the popular Warsaw poet and journalist. He was also married to Zofia Nałkowska at that time.<sup>7</sup> A young couple of Rygiers came to Kielce in Autumn 1906 to inculcate a spirit of the new times in the provincial town.<sup>8</sup>

Although “Echa Kieleckie” wished to be recognized as more than all-party, and renounced any links with the “directive of the party”,<sup>9</sup> in fact they sought to spread the ideology and program of the Liberal-Democratic Association, and to obtain the possible wide influence and electoral clientele.

The Liberal-Democratic Association was a small political party. It is difficult to establish the exact date of its creation, but it seems likely that it took place at the end of December 1904.<sup>10</sup> The Liberal-Democratic Association gathered in its ranks mainly representatives of the intelligentsia from the areas of the Kongresówka (The Kingdom of Poland). Aleksander Świętochowski, a respected writer, journalist and editor of “Prawda” for many years, became the chairman of the ZPD (the Liberal-Democratic Association). Aleksander Lednicki,<sup>11</sup> a leading representative of Polish and Russian liberalism, became Świętochowski’s deputy.

In many respects ZPD referred to the positivist tradition. During the revolutionary revival the ZPD decidedly distanced from the programs of the two parties representing the interests of the Polish class. The interests were represented by Stronnictwo Polityki Realnej and Stronnictwo Narodowo-Demokratyczne (National Democracy) also called Endecja. However, the ZPD treated much more kindly parties operating in the environment of workers, both the SDKPiL (Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania) and – especially – the PPS (The Polish Socialist Party). Ruch robotniczy Postępowi Demokraci (The Labor movement Liberal Democrats) was treated with sympathy, though in terms of ideology and program of action significantly differed from the ZPD. In Russia, Polish liberals looked for an ally mainly in the liberal party “Kadets”.

The Liberal-Democratic Association represented reformative tendencies. In its political agenda, clearly specified after accidents of 1905, the ZPD postulated autonomy of the Kingdom within the framework of the Russian Empire. In the field of social affairs – the comprehensive reform program in the spirit of democracy, by making forward far-reaching proposals, e.g. projects concerning nationalization of mines, parcelling of land, eight-hour day work, etc. The ZPD also demanded civil liberties: freedom of speech, freedom of associations, etc.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Marian Świącki (c. 1874-1914), moved to Warsaw from Kielce in 1909. Further details could not be determined. Zofia Nałkowska repeatedly mentioned him in her *Dzienniki (Diaries)*.

<sup>7</sup> A. Morąg, B. Szabat, *Rygier Leon Paweł*, [in:] ŚSB, vol. 2, p. 418.

<sup>8</sup> Eadem, *Nałkowska-Rygierowa Zofia*, [in:] ŚSB, vol. 2, p. 339.

<sup>9</sup> “Echa Kieleckie”, no. 1, October 13, 1906, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> T. Stegner, *Liberalowie Królestwa Polskiego*, Gdańsk 1990, p. 25.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 29.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 44-45, 47, 60, 96; T. Stegner, *Na pograniczu dwóch obyczajów politycznych: liberalowie Królestwa Polskiego wobec rewolucji 1905-1907*, [in:] *Spółeczeństwo i polityka –*

In its program, the ZPD paid a lot of attention to issues concerning culture and education. The newly established newspaper in Kielce attempted to bring together enlightened, liberal and progressive intelligence. L. Rygier aimed at “Echa Kieleckie” played the role of progressive journalistic organ and became a serious literary writing. In the Rygier’s weekly there were literary works of Stefan Żeromski, Janusz Korczak, Ludwik Stanisław Liciński and Antoni Czechow. The participation of Zofia Rygier-Nałkowska, the novice writer, who edited “the independent liberals” organ, cannot be omitted. It seems likely that to fairly large extent Rygier-Nałkowska contributed to the fact, that in the pages of the newspaper well-known people, who enjoyed respect in the capital, published the articles, e.g.: Aniela Szycówna, Iza Moszczeńska, Władysława Weychertówna and Zofia’s father Waclaw Nałkowski and others. A major role was probably played by parents of Zofia Nałkowska who ran the house opened to people of science and culture. Thanks to this fact, a young writer got to know all these people and possibly invited them to Kielce.

The support of “Echa Kieleckie” for Liberal-Democratic Association seems reasonable, if one takes into account that the newspaper was financed by the aforesaid liberals from Kielce: engineer Alexander Kossuth, printer Marian Święcki and dentist Stefan Papiński.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, manifesting “non-party attitude” was proof that the newspaper aims at full neutrality and win over its supporters: subscribers and contributors.

Zofia Nałkowska was actively involved in the development of the newspaper. Her literary works and journalistic articles were published in the newspaper. Because many of the articles were published anonymously it is difficult to state whether Nałkowska was the author of several of them. This is a matter for conjecture. It is a well-known fact that in 1906 Nałkowska published in “Echa Kieleckie” a novella *Zawalony Zamek*. Almost a year later two other novellas appeared in the newspaper: “Rzeczywistości” published in no. 45-48, which appeared since 31<sup>st</sup> August till 21<sup>st</sup> September, and *Koteczka czyli białe tulipany* described by the author as a joke. This novella was published in no. 56 and 57 and appeared on 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>th</sup> October 1907.

It is very likely that these novellas were written during Nałkowska’s visit in Kielce and were created under influence of careful observation of the environment of Kielce and carried some message for its residents.<sup>14</sup>

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*dorastanie do demokracji. Kultura polityczna w Królestwie Polskim na początku XX wieku*, eds. A. Żarnowska and T. Wolsza, Warsaw 1993, pp. 75-76.

<sup>13</sup> L. Kowalczyk-Mroczkowska, *Rola postępowej*, p. 204; B. Szabat, *W szkołkach i organizacjach bojowych. Kobiety na Kielecczyźnie na przełomie XIX i początkach XX wieku*, [in:] *Kobieta i świat polityki. Polska na tle porównawczym w XIX i początkach XX wieku*, eds. A. Żarnowska and A. Szwarc, Warsaw 1994, p. 222; S. Kossuth, *Wspomnienia kieleckie*, p. 11.

<sup>14</sup> Nałkowska probably addressed the story *Koteczka czyli białe tulipany* to women of Kielce with the message to fight the superstition that only a man can, or even should be able to experience love in open relationship. Zofia Nałkowska believed that a woman should not be deprived of it, she should at least have a choice. However, in the novella *Zawalony Zamek*, the author turned to the inhabitants of Kielce with an appeal to be sensitive to the suffering of others, to be mutually supportive, to find in this mutual support their own “zamek” (“castle”).

Apart from the aforesaid novellas and several translations, Zofia Nałkowska published in "Echa Kieleckie" at least two extensive articles: *Świątopietrze* and *Ruch kobiecy*. The term "at least" is appropriate to be used here because among so many anonymous articles, many of them could also have been written by Nałkowska. It seems likely that she could speak more broadly, e.g. on the women's issue in the pages of the newspaper. She could also have been the author of a questionnaire on issue of empowerment of women in no. 52, and co-author of *Open letter to the women of Kielce* in no. 53.

During the years 1906-1907, when Zofia Nałkowska lived in Kielce, she was particularly interested in the women's issue. She was undoubtedly influenced by the trend of the epoch in which the positivist watchword of emancipation grew louder. Young Zofia supported the women's lib and was aware of the need for changes in the customs and ethical standards, which would enable women to achieve full equality of rights.<sup>15</sup> These interests are reflected in "Echa Kieleckie", where Nałkowska published her publications on this issue, e.g. the article *Ruch kobiecy (Women's Movement)* – no. 27 from 29<sup>th</sup> May 1907. The article is a call for reform in terms of the empowerment of women. Zofia Nałkowska pointing at the successful results of the political equality of women in the world demanded for Polish women universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot, irrespective of religion and nationality. "Gaining political rights will give woman a weapon to fight for economic and social rights and help in reforming labour working conditions",<sup>16</sup> Nałkowska wrote in this article. The young writer also pointed to the reforms that were necessary in the field of education. Nałkowska supported the women's movement, which aspired to ensure that women on par with men had access to all universities.

The extensive information about the speech of a young writer at the First National Congress of Polish Women in Warsaw can be found in "Echa Kieleckie". The Congress was organized in June 1907 to commemorate the fortieth work anniversary of Eliza Orzeszkowa.<sup>17</sup>

In 1907 in no. 32 of "Echa Kieleckie", the anonymous article "Congress of Polish Women" was published. The article gave an account of the course of the session. Among other things, the article mentions Zofia Nałkowska as one of the people delivering reports. However, it was not true, because the speech of Nałkowska was not scheduled in the Congress program. She took the floor only in the discussion which ensued at the conclusion of the legal-political section.<sup>18</sup> The above article focused mainly on the resolutions of legal, political, economic and educational section.

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The work *Rzeczywistości (Realities)* is probably a warning to the people of Kielce, so they would not cut off from the tradition and were always ready to fight for freedom and free Poland.

<sup>15</sup> B. Rogatko, *Zofia Nałkowska*, Warsaw 1980, pp. 15-16.

<sup>16</sup> Z. Rygier-Nałkowska, *Ruch kobiecy*, "Echa Kieleckie", no. 27, May 29, 1907, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Cf.: A. Molenda, *I Ogólnopolski Zjazd Kobiet Polskich (9-12<sup>th</sup> June 1907)*. *Udział kielczanek*, "Rocznik Świętokrzyski", no. 27, 2002, pp. 75-92.

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem, pp. 86-87.

Zofia Nałkowska in her speech delivered at the Congress of Polish Women in Warsaw, performed as we know in the name of the youngest group of women, that is on behalf of her generation.

The extremely bold in far-reaching conclusions report was listened with interest. The Presiding Board was asked, according to rules, for an extension of time for the speaker for five minutes. Misunderstood intentions of the Presiding Board concerning the interruption of the report caused great confusion. Because of that, Maria Konopnicka, who was supposed to say a few words at the end of the Congress, tired and nervous of prolonged deliberations, left the room before the end of the session.<sup>19</sup>

The overly uncompromising statement of a writer triggered a wave of discussion published not only in the Warsaw and provincial writings, but especially in the pages of "Krytyka" ("Critique"), where a fierce discussion with doctor-sexologist Walenty Mikłaszewski took place.<sup>20</sup> To put an end to the confusion, which appeared around this issue, Zofia Rygier-Nałkowska sent the text of the report to William Feldman, who published it in edited by himself "Critique" in the notebook 11 from 1907.<sup>21</sup>

The information about the speech of Zofia Nałkowska at the Congress can also be found in the "Echa Kieleckie". In the above-mentioned no. 32 of "Echa Kieleckie" published on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1907, a comprehensive report concerning the Congress was published anonymously. The report stated, among other things, that "Mrs Rygier-Nałkowska read a report, in which she condemns the Congress' attitude concerning the youngest women". It seems likely that the author of this article was Nałkowska, who called her speech a "report" as well as in a letter to William Feldman, an editor of "Critique".<sup>22</sup> It should be noticed that report was not scheduled in the Congress agenda, but the floor taken in the discussion, which ended the legal-political section. In the next no. 33 (published on 19<sup>th</sup> June 1907), Maria Turzyna, editor of the Cracow "Nowe Słowo" ("New Word"), the participant of the Congress, informed readers of "Echa Kieleckie" about the course of the session. Turzyna characterized positively the speech of Nałkowska. "The strongest accent of the protest of this purely feminine injustice was voice of Mrs Zofia Rygier-Nałkowska, who drew out from the overall mood, especially taking into account the social importance of woman's humiliation – individualistic right to freedom – in glowing terms called for courage and sincerity in the struggle to defend her personal desires for love and happiness. The personal harm, this constraint imposed by the law and customs, is noticed and felt by most of women. It was proved by the applause interrupting the speaker and accompanying while she was descending from the platform".<sup>23</sup> The speech of Nałkowska not scheduled

<sup>19</sup> Z. J. Adamczyk, *Nałkowska w "Echach Kieleckich"*, "Przegląd Humanistyczny", no. 2, 1972, p. 139.

<sup>20</sup> H. Krichner, *Modernistyczna młodość Zofii Nałkowskiej*, "Pamiętnik Literacki", iss. 1, 1968, p. 67.

<sup>21</sup> Z. J. Adamczyk, *Nałkowska w "Echach"*, pp. 139-140.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>23</sup> M. Turzyna [Maria Wiśniewska], *Zjazd kobiet polskich*, "Echa Kieleckie", no. 33, June 19, 1907, p. 2.

in the Congress agenda provoked a strong response among female participants, who split into two groups: first part – mostly younger, peers, who supported Nałkowska, and the second part – mostly older women – protested against her speech. There was also a group of women who in protest left the session room (including Maria Konopnicka). Any taunts of other newspapers on this issue were explained under the heading “Editorial response” in the aforementioned no. 32 of “Echa Kieleckie”. Responding to some Mr St. W., it was stated that “Mrs Rygier-Nałkowska spoke on behalf of the youngest women, enslaved to it by the request of delegation sent to her. The information of »Goniec«, recognized as Endecja’s newspaper is biased and full of common malice. »Gazeta Polska« [*»Polish Newspaper«*], »Nowa Gazeta« [*»New Newspaper«*] and »Kurier Polski« [*»Polish Courier«*] clearly indicate that Maria Konopnicka left the room because of the behaviour of the public, not the content of the speech of Nałkowska. The Presiding Board interrupted the speaker only due to the fact that the regulations limited the speeches to 5 minutes, but refrained from its demands at the request of the audience”.<sup>24</sup>

It can be assumed that leaving the room by Maria Konopnicka was largely influenced by the behaviour of the Congress participants. It should be remembered that the content of Nałkowska speech was so bold in its thesis that it had to cause in some participants discontent, in others loud support.

The issue of women and the women’s movement tasks were not the only subjects that interested Nałkowska during her stay in Kielce. She was interested in educational matters very much, which associated her even more with the environment of liberals in Kielce.

It seems likely, that the young couple of Rygiers maintained social contacts with the environment, the more that they were supporters of the Liberal Democracy. In addition, they could not enjoy the respect in the clerical town, as Zofia Nałkowska probably did not hide that she married Rygier by way of trial and she was going to divorce him soon, which must have shocked many residents of Kielce.<sup>25</sup> Such a behaviour caused that the circle of their friends was limited.

The young couple maintained good relations especially with the family of Kossuths, who the Rygiers lived for some time (at Chęcińska Street), before they rented their own apartment.<sup>26</sup> It has not been established where they lived after and when exactly they moved out from the Kossuths.

At a time when Nałkowska lived with the Kossuths it is likely that she contacted with some members of the PPS, who visited the home of Alexander Kossuth, despite the secrecy that surrounded the meetings. It is very likely, that it was there where she met Jadwiga Matkowska, a dentist working with S. Papieski. Matkowska was also a friend with Irena Kossuth.<sup>27</sup> It is possible that it was Irena Kossuth who introduced Jadwiga Matkowska to Nałkowska. Zofia Nałkowska residing at the Kossuths’ place

<sup>24</sup> “Echa Kieleckie”, no. 32, June 15, 1907, p. 8.

<sup>25</sup> S. Kossuth, *Wspomnienia kieleckie*, p. 11

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem, p. 12.

was from time to time in the company of Kossuths' sisters: Irena and Barbara, and possibly their guests. Therefore, the connection between Zofia Nałkowska and Jadwiga Matkowska is highly probable.

Zofia Nałkowska highly valued Matkowska's independence activity, as in 1931, along with L. Rygier she witnessed her own signature the authenticity of Matkowska's work.<sup>28</sup> Young Zofia also admired Matkowska for the fact that in spite of the danger she helped political prisoners.<sup>29</sup> Nałkowska was fascinated by this attitude to such an extent that later for her whole life she was trying to bring help and alleviate the suffering of the prisoners, acting in the Society for the Care of Prisoners.

Undoubtedly, Nałkowska gained many new contacts and connections thanks to her job in "Echa Kieleckie", where she probably worked in the administration and dealt with accepting subscriptions and advertisements, and payment of fees to the authors of the texts published in this newspaper. These guesses can be made on the basis of Nałkowska's novel *Rówieśnice* (*Contemporaries*), as the author herself in *Dzienniki* (*Dairies*) mentioned that she concluded in the novel a lot of memories from the Kielce period.<sup>30</sup> The novel was written shortly after her departure from Kielce.

However, much more helpful in gaining new friends among the liberals in Kielce was Nałkowska's activity in initiated by Leon Rygier Stowarzyszenie Kursów dla Analfabetów Dorosłych (Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults), as well as Czytelnia Naukowa (the Academic Reading-Room).

Before the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults was formed, on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1906, the Academic Reading-Room was opened in Kielce. It was located in the house that belonged to Jakub Nowak, at the corner of Sienkiewicz and Duża Street.<sup>31</sup> The Academic Reading-Room was founded by people largely associated with the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults, "Echa Kieleckie", the Liberal-Democratic Association, and even with the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). Among the initiators of the Academic Reading-Room next to Stefan Papieski and Stanisław Świącicki were also Leon Rygier and Zofia Rygier-Nałkowska. It seems that they just need to be assigned a greater role in the creation of this institution, as they came to Kielce with the intent to stir up the sluggish environment and probably did everything to fulfil the purpose of their trip. Moreover, at that time in Warsaw many people among the intelligentsia undertook an initiative to popularize the idea of creation of Public Libraries, and it has to be noticed that the young couple of Rygiers came from Warsaw and still maintained contact with the Warsaw intelligentsia. It can be assumed that it caused that they tried to inculcate what was fashionable in the capital to people in Kielce.

Initially, Salomon Paradistal received a permission to run the Academic Reading-Room, while Marian Krzyżanowski was the librarian. In 1907, the Academic Reading-Room was bought by Marian Świącicki, the editor of "Echa Kieleckie", while Wacław

<sup>28</sup> Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe in Warsaw, Krzyż Niepodległości, sig. KN/20 I 1931, p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> J. Pająk, B. Szabat, *Matkowska Jadwiga Regina*, [in:] ŚSB, vol. 2, pp. 321-322.

<sup>30</sup> See: Z. Nałkowska, *Dzienniki 1909-1917*, Warsaw 1976, p. 44; Z. Rygier-Nałkowska, *Rówieśnice*, Cracow 1968, p. 24.

<sup>31</sup> R. Wrońska-Gorzkowska, E. Gorzkowski, *Album kielecki*, p. 52.

Jagniątkowski was appointed librarian. Stefan Juniewicz was appointed the next librarian.<sup>32</sup> On 18<sup>th</sup> December 1907, the review of books in the Academic Reading-Room was carried out, and on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1908 a secret letter was delivered to the “Governor’s General” office. The office reported that library of the Academic Reading-Room that belonged to Marian Świąćki promotes revolutionary ideas among learning youth. In connection with the confiscation of 466 illegal publications, the Academic Reading-Room was suggested to be closed. This probably happened on May 1908. However, the book collection of the Academic Reading-Room served much longer in the created afterwards Towarzystwo Biblioteki Publicznej (Society of Public Library) which caused the growing importance of the Society for the culture in the region of Kielce.

“Echa Kieleckie” greeted the forming Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults with great enthusiasm. In the no. 1 of “Echa Kieleckie” the information was found: “The local branch of the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults will start operating soon, the verification process is being completed. With such a huge number of illiterate people, as we find in Kielce – there will be enough work for all people of good will regardless of Macierz Szkolna (Polish Educational Society). The work, that excludes the possibility of competition, will be joined up with the aforesaid branch, confident in the support of those who care to fight the obscurantism”.<sup>33</sup> It was the call to the local social environment to provide support for an initiative to create a branch of the Association in Kielce.

Finally, a branch in Kielce was legalized on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1906.<sup>34</sup>

Zofia Nałkowska actively participated in the creation of the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults in Kielce and was a member from the very beginning until she left Kielce.

The main activity of SKdAD (the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults) was to organize courses for illiterates. At the beginning of the school year 1906/1907, 6 sets began to work, but on January 1907, the number had risen to 12, including 227 learning illiterates.<sup>35</sup> However, on May 1907, 270 illiterates attended the courses, including 208 Jews.<sup>36</sup> Also during the school year 1907/1908 the Association ran courses.

Because such a large Jewish population expressed a desire to participate in courses organized by the Kielce branch of SKdAD, the sets consisting entirely of Jews were operating. Therefore, at a meeting of members of the Association, Zofia Rygier-Nałkowska was selected a chairperson, and the proposal was made forward so the teachers conducting classes on the sets used the jargon. Probably, the project to organize courses in Yiddish was proposed by Zofia Nałkowska.<sup>37</sup> Nałkowska became a part

<sup>32</sup> L. Kowalczyk-Mroczkowska, *Geneza księgozbioru Czytelni Naukowej w Kielcach (1906-1908) i jego funkcja w środowisku społecznym miasta*, “Studia Kieleckie”, no. 1, 1988, p. 26.

<sup>33</sup> “Echa Kieleckie”, no. 1, October 13, 1906, p. 7.

<sup>34</sup> Ibidem, no. 5, November 10, 1906, p. 5.

<sup>35</sup> B. Szabat, *Walka o szkołę polską w okresie rewolucji 1905-1907 w guberni kieleckiej*, Kielce 2001, p. 149.

<sup>36</sup> “Echa Kieleckie”, no. 22, May 11, 1907, p. 7.

<sup>37</sup> L. Kowalczyk-Mroczkowska, *Rola postępowej*, p. 207.

of the academic committee at the aforesaid meeting. From that moment a young writer began to be active in favour of the Association. She double-chaired meetings of the Kielce branch on January 27<sup>th</sup> and February 24<sup>th</sup>, and on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1907 at a meeting of the academic committee she accepted the responsibility of teaching inspections.<sup>38</sup> Franciszek Loeffler helped her in fulfilling her duties.<sup>39</sup> Zofia Nałkowska was particularly interested in conducting courses in Yiddish for the Jewish population. Despite the opposition of the main board of the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults expressed by W. Weychertówna, who was delegated by the Warsaw board, arrived in Kielce on 10<sup>th</sup> July and took part in a meeting of the local branch, Zofia Nałkowska firmly adhere to her resolution and tried to influence the members of the board of the Kielce branch to support the proposal concerning the jargon. For some time she managed to gain the support of the local board members. Unfortunately, it did not last long, because in May the information appeared in "Echa Kieleckie". The board of Kielce branch of the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults sent a letter to main board in Warsaw, which reported that as a result of the voting "a branch of Kielce ceases teaching of reading and writing in the jargon".<sup>40</sup> From that moment Yiddish became only an aid in the lecture of Polish language for the Jews who do not understand Polish.

The most involved in the work of SKdAD (the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults), the Academic Reading-Room and "Echa Kieleckie" next to Rygiers were: Stefan Papiński; dentist and co-owner of "Echa Kieleckie", Stanisław Święcki; printer, publisher and co-owner of "Echa Kieleckie", Kossuths family; whose apartment serve to print on hectograph leaflets and forms for Organizacja Bojowa (Figthing Organization), Franciszek Loeffler; a member of PPS (the Polish Socialist Party), the organizer of the first trade unions in Kielce, Adam Sotowski; chairman of SKdAD, Jadwiga Matkowska; Marian Krzyżanowski, Kazimiera Grunertówna, Salomon Paradistal, Helena Paradistalowa, Edward Artwiński, Adolf Wolman, Teodor Kłodawski, Zygmunt Rzędowski and Ignacy Rzędowski, Stefan Juniewicz, Maria Klejstówna, Jan Daszewski and others.<sup>41</sup> It can be assumed that Zofia Nałkowska met, valued and admired many of these people. Certainly, she had a close relationship with Franciszek Loeffler,<sup>42</sup> with whom she inspected teaching classes of the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Z. Adamczyk, *Nałkowska w "Echach"*, p. 138.

<sup>39</sup> B. Szabat, *Kielecki oddział Stowarzyszenia Kursów dla Analfabetów Dorosłych (1906-08)*, "Kieleckie Studia Historyczne", no. 2, 1977, p. 121.

<sup>40</sup> "Echa Kieleckie", no 27, May 29, 1907, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> L. Kowalczyk-Mroczkowska, *Geneza księgozbioru*, p. 32; W. Obara, B. Szabat, *Paradistal Salomon*, [in:] ŚSB, vol. 2, p. 355.

<sup>42</sup> Loeffler Franciszek (1874-1919) – the socialist and public activist. Since 1894 the activist of PPS (The Polish Socialist Party). In 1898, imprisoned in the pavilion X in the Warsaw Citadel. He took an active part in the revolution of 1905. Associate of "Echa Kieleckie", between 1914-1917 editor of the weekly "Ziemia Kielecka", co-organizer of Biblioteka Publiczna (the Public Library) and the branch of the Polish Culture Society. During World War I, he was the chairman of Rada Okręgowa Ziemi Kieleckiej (the Regional Council of Kielce District), member of Centralny Komitet Narodowy (the Central National Committee). In 1917 he became a member

To some extent, Towarzystwo Kultury Polskiej (the Polish Culture Society) was a continuator of the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults, mainly due to the same people acting in both organizations. Therefore, the output of the Kielce branch of the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults was not squandered. The Polish Cultural Society was founded on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1905 on the initiative of middle-class intelligentsia gathered around the Liberal-Democratic Association. The leading ideologist of the Polish Culture Society was Aleksander Świętochowski. Nałkowska's father, Waclaw became a member of the board.<sup>44</sup> Nałkowska got along with her father and therefore she could follow with great interest the work of the Warsaw branch of the Society. She actively participated in the organizational activities to set up the Polish Culture Society in Kielce.

“Echa Kieleckie” referred positively to creation of the Kielce branch of the Society. A number of publications discussing the program and activities of the Warsaw branch of the Polish Culture Society appeared in the pages of the newspaper, as well as articles preparing a place to create the local branch of the Society. “What is to be done – was written in »Echa Kieleckie« – even in our Kielce. One of the most important tasks, e.g.: is to create a self-education circle for thirsty for knowledge; the issue of cooperation and economic relations lies fallow, we do not have any ethical Associations, that would intelligently cultivate a well-conceived ideas of abstinence and spread a passion for the spiritual and aesthetic pleasure – all that good will needs could be managed if we connect under the slogan of Polish culture”.<sup>45</sup> “Echa Kieleckie” also drew attention to the need to promote by the Polish Culture Society all forms of knowledge, e.g.: teaching of Esperanto, which was very popular at that time not only in Kielce.<sup>46</sup>

On 18<sup>th</sup> March 1907, the organizers of the Kielce branch of the Polish Culture Society received a letter from Warsaw. The letter informed about the consent of the main board to open the local branch of the Society, and also about the fact that this was given to the authorities, which meant that it was possible to convene an organizational meeting. However, such a meeting, proposing the creation of the Kielce branch, took place on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1908, so after Zofia Nałkowska left Kielce. The meeting has taken the decision to register the Society in Kielce.<sup>47</sup>

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of the Komisja Porozumiewawcza Stronnictw Niepodległościowych (Coordination Committee of Independent Parties), and on behalf of the PPS he also became the member of City Council. On November 1918, he was appointed people's commissioner of the Provisional Government of Polish People's Republic for the city and district of Kielce. In 1919, on behalf of the PPS was elected to the parliament., J. Naumiuk, *Loeffler Franciszek*, [in:] *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 17, 1972, pp. 512-513; J. Pająk, J. Z. Pająk, *Loeffler Franciszek Dominik*, [in:] *SSB*, vol. 2, p. 288-289.

<sup>43</sup> “Echa Kieleckie”, no. 7, February 9, 1907, p. 7.

<sup>44</sup> J. Bemówna, *Towarzystwo Kultury Polskiej*, [in:] *Nasza walka o szkołę polską 1901-1917*, ed. B. Nawroczyński, vol. 2, Warsaw 1934, p. 188; B. Szabat, *Kielecki oddział Towarzystwa Kultury Polskiej*, “Kieleckie Studia Historyczne”, no. 4, 1986, p. 89.

<sup>45</sup> “Echa Kieleckie”, no. 17, April 20, 1907, p. 1.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>47</sup> The main activists of TKP (the Polish Culture Society) in Kielce were Stefan Pachelski, who was in charge of the Board and Franciszek Loeffler, Jan Rutkiewicz, Aleksander Kossuth,

In connection with the exacerbating political situation, a number of successful assassinations, since the middle of 1907, the wave of searches, arrests and convictions began to increase throughout the Kingdom. It did not omit the province of Kielce, where a large-scale liquidation action took place. It also included “Echa Kieleckie”, the Association of Courses for Illiterate Adults and finally the Academic Reading-Room. Since 1908, the political, social and mental oppression began in the Kingdom anew.

Together with the exacerbating political situation, the young couple of Rygiers also had to contend with an unfavourable attitude of the inhabitants of Kielce, as well as financial problems. All this caused that in the spring of 1907 they left Kielce.

The Kielce period brought many changes in Nałkowska’s life. She looked at social problems in more mature way, i.e.: the fate of political prisoners and widespread illiteracy. If possible, she tried to help. She participated actively in the organization and activities of the Kielce branch of SKdAD. Nałkowska also helped in organizing the Academic Reading-Room and TKP (the Polish Culture Society). She cared a lot about raising the cultural level of Kielce. Although she was forced to leave Kielce, she thought about it a lot.

She spent there her happiest days – as she repeatedly stated in her *Dzienniki*. It was probably an influence of friends she had among the cultural elite of Kielce sympathizing with the views of liberals.

In the emotional sphere of a young writer during her stay in Kielce particularly significant was emerging feeling for Marian Świącicki. From the analysis of the content of *Dzienniki* comes out that it was one-sided feeling; it came only from Nałkowska. Although it may have been unhappy love, it does not change the fact that the period was warmly recalled by Nałkowska in her *Dzienniki*.<sup>48</sup>

### Zusammenfassung

#### ZOFIA NAŁKOWSKA UND LIBERALEN AUS KIELCE

Zofia Nałkowska hat sich in Kielce seit Herbst 1906 bis Frühling 1907 aufgehalten, weil Leon Rygier die Zeitschrift “Echa Kieleckie” literarisch zu leiten begann. Die Rolle der jungen Zofia Nałkowska in der Redaktionsarbeit war unvergleichlich kleiner, aber auch sie hat ziemlich oft die Zeitschrift mit ihrem Feder unterstützt. Als sie in Kielce war, hat sie sich sehr aktiv in die Tätigkeit der Gesellschaft Stowarzyszenie Kursów dla Analfabetów Dorosłych (Kurse für erwachsene Analphabete), in die Bildung der wissenschaftlichen Leihbibliothek (Czytelni Naukowej) und der Gesellschaft Towarzystwo Kultury Polskiej mit einer Filiale in Kielce engagiert. Mit dieser Aktiviät näherte sie sich eindeutig dem Kreis der Liberalen. Ihr soziales

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Samuel Paradistal, Adolf Wolman, Stefan Papiewski, Mieczysław Zwoliński, T. Sabat, Z. Sabat, “Sabat” dla cmentarzy: cmentarz Stary w Kielcach. Przewodnik po wybranych grobach ludzi zasłużonych dla regionu, Kielce 1993, p. 23; B. Szabat, Kielecki oddział Towarzystwa, p. 91; eadem, *Walka o szkołę*, p. 150.

<sup>48</sup> Z. Nałkowska, *Dzienniki 1909-1917*, pp. 44, 67.

Wirken in Kielce hatte großen Einfluss auf ihr weiteres Leben. Es lässt sich bestimmt feststellen, dass sie sich dort in Kielce mit der "Vorliebe für die Sozialarbeit angesteckt hat". In der Zeit der "Echa Kieleckie" beschäftigte sich die junge Schriftstellerin und Publizistin mit dem Schicksal von Frauen. Diese Angelegenheit war auch für die Liberalen von großer Bedeutung. Z. Nałkowska forderte ethische Regeln und Normen im Bereich der Sittlichkeit zu ändern. Dieser Wandel erlaubte Frauen ihr Würde, Wert, Menschlichkeit und volle Gleichberechtigung zu erreichen.

**Schlüsselwörter:** Zofia Nałkowska, "Echa Kieleckie", das russische Teilungsgebiet, Kielce, die erste Dekade des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts.

**Keywords:** Zofia Nałkowska, "Echa Kieleckie", Kielce, first decade of twentieth century.

### Streszczenie

#### ZOFIA NAŁKOWSKA A KIELECCY LIBERAŁOWIE

Zofia Nałkowska przebywała w Kielcach od jesieni 1906 r. do wiosny 1907 r. w związku z objęciem przez Leona Rygiera kierownictwa literackiego pisma „Echa Kieleckie”. Rola młodej Zofii Nałkowskiej w redagowaniu „Ech Kieleckich” była niewspółmiernie mniejsza, ale i ona dość często wspierała pismo swoim piórem.

Będąc w Kielcach Z. Nałkowska bardzo czynnie zaangażowana była także w działalność Stowarzyszenia Kursów dla Analfabetów Dorosłych oraz w powstanie Czytelni Naukowej i kieleckiego oddziału Towarzystwa Kultury Polskiej, co niewątpliwie zbliżyło ją do środowiska liberałów. Działalność społeczna prowadzona przez Z. Nałkowską w Kielcach miała duży wpływ na dalsze jej życie. Można z całą pewnością stwierdzić, że to właśnie tam „zaraziła się” bakcyłem pracy społecznej.

W okresie „Ech Kieleckich” młodą pisarkę i publicystkę interesowała kwestia kobieca szczególnie bliska liberałom. Z. Nałkowska zwróciła uwagę na problem konieczności i możliwości przemian w zakresie obyczaju oraz norm etycznych, które umożliwiłyby kobiecie osiągnięcie pełni wartości, godności i człowieczeństwa, pełnego równouprawnienia.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Zofia Nałkowska, "Echa Kieleckie", zabór rosyjski, Kielce, pierwsza dekada XX w.

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