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## **The Revolution of 1905 in Częstochowa – based on the memories of Bronisława Zejden**

**Streszczenie:** Rewolucja 1905 r. wymyka się prostym schematom i interpretacjom. Objęła obszary Imperium Rosyjskiego, a także ziemie Królestwa Polskiego. Miała ona wieloaspektowe podłoże, a kluczowe było niezadowolenie ludności robotniczej i chłopskiej. Ważną rolę odgrywały również czynniki polityczne i dążenia w przeciwstawianiu się samodzierżawiu. W Królestwie Polskim dodatkowym czynnikiem, reprezentowanym przez lewicowe stronnictwa rewolucyjne, było dążenie do odzyskania niepodległości i suwerenności narodu. Do największych wystąpień doszło w większych miastach imperium oraz podległego mu Kraju Nadwiślańskiego. Obok Petersburga, Warszawy, Rygi czy Łodzi takim miastem była również na początku XX w. Częstochowa. Wydarzenia zaistniałe u progu nowego wieku do dziś budzą kontrowersje i zainteresowanie wśród wielu historyków. Badacze ruchu robotniczego i dziejów organizacji partyjnych w swoich badaniach naukowych przedstawiali wydarzenia z lat rewolucyjnych. W dalszym ciągu można jednak wzbogacić obecny stan wiedzy, tym bardziej że nie wszystkie źródła zostały odnalezione i opublikowane. Jednym z takich dokumentów jest krótki pamiętnik Bronisławy z Zejdenów Barc, uczestniczki strajków, które miały miejsce na terenie Częstochowy.

**Słowa kluczowe:** rewolucja, partie polityczne, rewolucjoniści, robotnicy, Częstochowa, Bronisława Zejden

The revolution of 1905 escapes simple schemes and interpretations<sup>1</sup>. It covered the areas of the Russian Empire and the lands of the Kingdom of Poland that were part of it. It was a rupture caused by various causes. The dissatisfaction of the working and peasant population was crucial<sup>2</sup>. Political factors and efforts to oppose tsarist absolutism were also important. An additional important element of some of the revolutionary parties in

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<sup>1</sup> K. Piskała, *Zapomniana rewolucja*, [w:] *Rewolucja 1905 – przewodnik krytyki politycznej*, red. K. Piskała, W. Marc, Warsaw 2013, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> F. Tych, *Rok 1905*, Warsaw 1990, p. 14–18.

the Polish lands was the nation's quest for independence and sovereignty. The biggest strikes took place where industry developed and there were large, dense clusters of workers. It refers here to the largest cities of the Russian Empire and the then subordinate Vistula River Region<sup>3</sup>. Apart from St. Petersburg, Warsaw, Riga or Lodz, such a city was also Częstochowa at the beginning of the 20th century<sup>4</sup>. The events that took place at the beginning of the new century still arouse controversy and interest among many historians. Researchers of the workers movement and the historians of party organizations: Feliks Tych, Anna Żarnowska<sup>5</sup>, Adam Rotaub<sup>6</sup> and Juliusz Sętkowski<sup>7</sup> presented events from the revolutionary years in their research. However, it is still possible to enrich the current state of knowledge, especially since not all sources have been found and published. One such document is a short diary of Bronisława Zejden-Barc, a participant in the strikes that took place in Częstochowa, and also a person involved in the political activity of the socialist movement. Her notes will probably enrich the scarce information on the course of the revolution in one of the towns of the Piotrków Governorate in 1905. The source deliberately did not correct the errors and did not modernise the language in order to better reflect the character of the statements presented by the revolutionary in her biography. The main inspirations for the revolution in the Kingdom of Poland were political parties representing the Polish left wing. They operated mainly in the largest urban and industrial centres, as in Russian parties. The Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL) characterized by socialist and Marxist ideology, or the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) characterized by a labour character (its worldview was deeply rooted in the socialist trend). The PPS differed from the SDKPiL in the presented program, which strongly emphasized the aspirations for independence. The Social Democrats mostly did not support the pursuit of independence, putting the need for social and class change first. One of the opponents of the views presented by Róża Luxemburg<sup>8</sup>, founder of social

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<sup>3</sup> That name was given to Kingdom of Poland by Tsar Aleksander II after Januray uprising, in purpose of decreasing the rank and autonomy of Polish lands.

<sup>4</sup> H. Rola, *Częstochowa w latach 1905–1919*, [w:] *Dzieje Częstochowy od zarania do czasów współczesnych*, red. S. Krakowski, Katowice 1964, s. 110.

<sup>5</sup> A. Żarnowska, *Zasięg, wpływ i baza społeczna PPS w przeddzień rewolucji 1905 r.*, „Kwartalnik Historyczny”, 1960, R. 67, nr 2, p. 210.

<sup>6</sup> A. Rotaub, *Częstochowa w rewolucji 1905–1907 roku*, [w:] *Dzieje Częstochowy od zarania do czasów współczesnych*, red. S. Krakowski, Katowice 1964.

<sup>7</sup> J. Sętkowski, *Czyn zbrojny organizacji bojowych Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej w Częstochowskim 1904–1910*, Częstochowa 2003, p. 16–42.

<sup>8</sup> Róża Luxemburg, (b. 5 III 1871 r. w Zamościu, d. 15 I 1919 r. w Berlinie), daughter of Elijah Luxemburg and Lina née Loewenstein. Socialism theoretician, activist of the Polish, German and international workers' movement. See: F. Tych, *Luksemburg Rozalia (1870–1919)*, [w:] *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, t. XVIII, Warszawa–Kraków–Wrocław–Gdańsk 1973, p. 119–129.

democrats, was Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz<sup>9</sup>, with a literary pseudonym Michał Luśnia<sup>10</sup>. He played a significant role in creating PPS party assumptions. The programme adopted at the Paris congress in November 1892 stated that: „The Polish Socialist Party, as a political organization of the Polish working class, fighting for its liberation from the yoke of capitalism, aims primarily at overthrowing today’s political slavery and gaining power for the proletariat. In this endeavour, it aims for an independent democratic republic”<sup>11</sup>. In this way, the independence issue has been positively settled once and for all<sup>12</sup>. The parties shared views, but were largely co-dependent in terms of actions from around the revolutionary years.

In November 1906 there was a split in the PPS. From the position of independence part of the party activists were broken out. The newly formed grouping was – PPS Left Wing<sup>13</sup>. It soon set up a separate organisation. After the split, there was also a need to adopt a new party program. This happened at the tenth PPS congress in Vienna in March 1907. The author of the new postulates was Felix Perl<sup>14</sup>, who took the basic content from the work of the then deceased activist K. Kelles-Krauza. The sense of Perl’s work is perfectly illustrated by a brochure from 1894: „The classics of our programme”, which stated: „The proletariat does not offer its strength for an abstract idea, imposed on it from outside, but that by fighting for Poland’s independence it satisfied its own urgent and essential need”<sup>15</sup>. The party programme of the revolutionary faction did not differ significantly from the prototype given to it during the formation of party structures as early as the 19th century.

The revolutionary activists gathered around the PPS and SDKPiL were waiting for a breakthrough event that would give an impulse for a revolution to break out with the simultaneous weakening of the Russian Empire. Undoubtedly, this event was the Russian-Japanese war of 1904. It seemed to herald certain changes in the social life of the entire empire, including Częstochowa<sup>16</sup>.

The failure of the Tsarate in the Far East and the rapid deterioration of the material situation of the workers have had a major impact on the start of the struggle for national

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<sup>9</sup> Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz (b. 22 III 1872 r., d. 24 VI 1905 r. Son of Michał Elhard and Matylda Daniewska. Sociologist and philosopher, active member of Polish Socialist Party. See: T. Snyder, *Kazimierz Kelles Krauz jako socjolog i przykład fenomenu socjologicznego*, „Myśl Socjaldemokratyczna”, 3 (1993), nr 2/3, p. 36–43.

<sup>10</sup> A. Ciołkosz, *Ludzie P.P.S.*, London 1981, p. 19.

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>13</sup> Ibidem, p. 35.

<sup>14</sup> Feliks Perl (b. 26 IV 1871 in Warsaw, d. 15 IV 1927 in Warsaw). Socialist activist and publicist, member of the PPS. See: Michał Śliwa, *Feliks Perl*, Warsaw 1988, p. 349.

<sup>15</sup> A. Ciołkosz, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>16</sup> W. Palus, *Spółczesność Częstochowy w drodze ku niepodległości w latach 1795–1918*, [w:] *Częstochowy drogi ku niepodległości*, red. S. Podobiński, Częstochowa 1998, p. 20.

and social liberation<sup>17</sup>. Single actions of the revolutionaries had already taken place a year earlier, when on May 1, 1903, the Racow<sup>18</sup> PPS organization has started active party work. At night, two red flags were hung on the chimneys of the smelter with the inscription: „Long live socialist Poland”, and on the telegraphic line of the Warsaw-Vienna railway an announcement was made: „Long live 8 hours of work”<sup>19</sup>. The local SDKPiL has also seen an increase in activity, mainly through an increase in the amount of correspondence in the central party press<sup>20</sup>. It is worth noting that this activity was conditioned by the number of political group structures in a given area. Usually, most of the PPS demonstrations took place in cities where the party’s local committees<sup>21</sup> were located, including in Częstochowa. It proves how important was this city for central committee of PPS.

The strongest PPS unit in Częstochowa was established in the years 1901–1902, in a steelworks located in the area of Racow. Correspondence between the workers participating in the PPS<sup>22</sup> structures has been preserved from this period, which was then printed in the socialist magazine „Robotnik”<sup>23</sup>. PPS considered the printed word to be one the most effective propaganda tool among the others, as evidenced by the publishing of a number of newspaper and magazine titles<sup>24</sup>, addressed mainly to the working class. Thanks to this, the range of the party also spread to nearby Częstochowa. One of the first factories to be influenced by PPS agitation was “Warta”, where one of the first demonstrations took place in 1903. Women who opposed the brutal treatment by the foreman went on strike. At the same time, in the middle of May, a weaving plant unit of 119 women and 21 men also went on strike. The reason for this was another attempt to reduce earnings, which were decreasing every month anyway, eventually bringing a reduction of 20 copecks<sup>25</sup>. This made the situation worse for the workers.

Their location was hopeless in many cases. Since 1897, the working day was 11 and ½ hours, which was often exceeded. Low wages made it impossible to appease the elementary life needs of factory workers and their families. Workers, especially women, were treated by foremen with all the brutality<sup>26</sup>. Hence, thoughts were formed in the minds of the new generation to fight for more favourable remuneration, improved quality

<sup>17</sup> H. Rola, op. cit., p. 116.

<sup>18</sup> Racow (Raków) is the name of the region of Częstochowa and also by this title – Inhabitants of Częstochowa described ironworks.

<sup>19</sup> W. Palus, *Spoleczeństwo*, p. 20.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 20. d

<sup>21</sup> A. Żarnowska, op. cit., p. 365–369.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, s. 369.

<sup>23</sup> The newspaper established during the second PPS meeting in 1894 year.

<sup>24</sup> D. Adamczyk, *Wydawnictwo „Życie” 1906–1914 – Z dziejów wydawnictw Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej*, [w:] *Rocznik naukowo dydaktyczny*, red. J. Jarowiecki, Cracow 1987, p. 149.

<sup>25</sup> A. Rotaub, op. cit., s. 127.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 126.

of life and hope for a better future in an independent state. A large part of the revolutionaries were young people, often minors. They sought to improve their living conditions away from the factories that dominated the city. According to estimates, Częstochowa was the third largest industrial centre of the Kingdom of Poland<sup>27</sup>. In order to better illustrate the situation prevailing in Częstochowa in the years 1905–1907, the basic branches of industry located in the city are presented below:

- The “Warta” factory was established in 1896<sup>28</sup>. Her name was then – “Przędzalnia i Tkalnia Juty Warta”. The factory consisted of two production departments: a spinning mill equipped with preparation teams with spinning machines with a total number of about 1 800 spindles and a weaving mill with dwarfs and a preparation department. A large sale for tomorrow’s products, especially to Russia, was conducive to the factory’s development. The private company was transformed into a joint stock company – “Przędzalnia i Tkalnia Juty “Warta” SA” with its registered office in Warsaw<sup>29</sup>. A list of workers admitted to the factory since 1903 was kept. This list has been preserved to this day in the Częstochowa archives<sup>30</sup>.
- Częstochowa Linen Factory “Stradom”. These plants were established in 1883 under the name “Joint Stock Society of Częstochowa Jute and Hemp Plants Brothers Goldstein and Openheim” in Częstochowa. In 1900 the company was transformed into a joint stock company – “Częstochowskie Zakłady Wyrobów Włókienniczych “Stradom” SA “ with its registered office in Warsaw<sup>31</sup>.
- Częstochowa Cotton Industry Plant named after the founder of the company – Modzelewski. The establishment of these plants was connected with the establishment of a spinning and weaving plant for jute<sup>32</sup>. Częstochowa was one of the largest centres of the jute industry. In 1884, on the left side of the railway track in Bleszno beside the Warta river. Władysław Edward Kronenberg<sup>33</sup> erected a small building in which he installed preparatory teams with a small number of spindles, linen spinning mills and weaving workshops. In 1889, the plant was taken over by a French company called “Spółka Akcyjna Przemysłu

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>28</sup> J. Palczewski, *Zarys rozwoju przemysłu włókienniczego w Częstochowie*, [w:] *Dzieje Częstochowy od zarania do czasów współczesnych*, red. S. Krakowski, Katowice 1964, p. 210.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>30</sup> Archive State in Częstochowa [APCZ], sign. 193. List of employees at the Warta factory from 1906, passim.

<sup>31</sup> J. Palczewski, op. cit., p. 210.

<sup>32</sup> F. Sobalski, *Przemysł częstochowski (1892–1914)*, Częstochowa 2009, s. 42–44.

<sup>33</sup> Władysław Edward Kronenberg (b. 27 VI 1848 in Warsaw, d. 16 IV 1892 in Cannes). Son of Leopold Stanisław Kronenberg and Ernesta Rozalia Leo. An engineer, industrialist, investor. He started to build a factory in Częstochowa in 1883 and 1884. See: K. Reychman, *Szkice genealogiczne*, Warsaw 1936, s. 110–115.

Włókienniczego La Chenstochovienne”<sup>34</sup>, commonly referred to as “Częstochowa” since then. The boardroom was located in Roubaix<sup>35</sup>. The company purchased the adjacent areas of “Przędzalnia Tkalni i Juty” and built a complex of buildings already in 1900<sup>36</sup>.

- The Dye Shop “Wilhem Brass i synowie”. The plant was established in 1880 by Located on the right bank of the Warta River. The scope of the company’s work was the dyeing of cotton, flax, jute and woollen yarns and the bleaching of cotton yarn, bast fibres and the mercerisation of cotton yarn. Initially, this plant dyed yarn imported from Łódź, later from Częstochowa textile plants and others.
- “Stradomskie Zakłady Przemysłu Wełnianego 1-Maja”. Founded in 1885 under the name: “Przędzalnia Wełny Czesankowej. Skin Dye Shop. Peltzer and S-wie. “This company was then transformed into: “French Joint Stock Company of the Textile Industry”. Around 1900, production started to increase. This period also saw the construction of a new hall where a large part of the new textile equipment was installed<sup>37</sup>.
- Częstochowa Wool Industrial factories named M. Koszutska. The plants are located in ul. Krakowska 80 in Częstochowa. It was established in 1889 under the name: „Zakłady Motte, Meillasoux and Caulliez”. The factory grounds were located on the left bank of the Warta River, at the mouth of the tributaries of Stradomka and Konopka which flowed into it. The company was initially small. The production branches included: sorting room, wool laundry, preparation room and spinning room. The production halls and machine movement were heated by our own boiler rooms and steam machine.

However, textile factories were not the only industry located in Częstochowa. An important role for the operation of the city’s structures at the beginning of the 20th century, as well as for the revolution itself, was played by the „Częstochowa” Steelworks, also called „Raków”, „Hantke”, „B. Hantke”<sup>38</sup>. It was founded by Warsaw industrialist Bernard Hantke<sup>39</sup>. Around 1875 he built a nail factory in Warsaw, and in 1882 he transformed it into a joint stock company „Towarzystwo Zakłady Metalowe B. Hantke”. It was a period of prosperity in the metal industry, which led to the transformation of the

<sup>34</sup> F. Sobalski, op. cit., p. 42–44.

<sup>35</sup> The city and the region in France – Hauts – De – France.

<sup>36</sup> J. Palczewski, op. cit., p. 203.

<sup>37</sup> Ibidem, p. 206–207.

<sup>38</sup> J. Zimny, H. Rola, *Z dziejów huty im. B. Bieruta w Częstochowie*, [w:] *Dzieje Częstochowy od zarania do czasów współczesnych*, red. S. Krakowski, Katowice 1964, p. 252.

<sup>39</sup> B. Hantke, (b. 2 X 1826 in Warsaw, d. 21 IV 1900), son of Adolf Hantke and Karolina Koehn. Industrialist, founder of ironworks which has been built on the Częstochowa grounds. See., K. Reychman, op. cit., p. 95.

company's profile into metal products. This is one of the reasons that prompted the industrialist to build a modern metallurgical plant. In 1895–1896 Hantke built a modern steelworks near Częstochowa. It was to supply the metal factory with sufficient iron and semi-finished products. Construction started in 1896 and was completed in 1902<sup>40</sup>. The expansion in Rakov, near the city, was halted by the approaching economic crisis, which affected not only the factory owners. Workers have also suffered greatly, whose wages have been reduced and the prices of goods needed to survive have increased<sup>41</sup>.

Wages in the Częstochowa industry were varied. In 1876 it was 40–60 copecks<sup>42</sup> (cop.). Women and the minor part of workers usually earned half as much. For comparison, a pound of butter costed 32 cop., pound of lard 19 cop., and a pound of wheat bread 6 and ½ cop. The contrast between earnings and the cost of living is particularly pronounced when compared to the prices of extremely high housing rents. In 1904, renting an apartment consisting of three rooms and a kitchen with sanitary facilities (local sewage system) cost three hundred rubles a year. An apartment with the same number of rooms, without sanitary facilities, already cost one hundred and eighty rubles. One hundred and twenty rubles were demanded for a room with a kitchen with appliances, without the appliances of a hundred rubles. The cheapest single-room apartment in the city centre cost fifty rubles, while on the outskirts it costed thirty copecks<sup>43</sup>. The workers and their families lived mostly in cramped and damp rooms. Workers with their own apartments were a rarity. With the development of industry, there was an increase in the population, which most often came from the surrounding smaller towns. In 1880 Częstochowa had 18,147 inhabitants, in 1893 – 28,976 and in 1904 – 61,141. In 24 years, the population living in the city area has almost tripled. This growth was difficult to keep up with the housing industry. According to the census of residential buildings from 1882, there were 1,391 buildings in Częstochowa, including 900 brick and 491 wooden ones. There were 311 single-storey houses, two-storey only 20. In 1904, the town already had 2,493 buildings, including 2,155 brick and 388 wooden ones<sup>44</sup>. The development of residential construction consisted mainly of basic and modest construction of single-family houses or several family houses.

The life situation resulting from the situation of workers' families did not allow the majority to gain any education. They usually presented a low level of education, few representatives of this social group were able to read and write. It was only the events of 1905–1907 that had a fundamental impact on changes in the cultural and educational

<sup>40</sup> J. Zimny, H. Rola, op. cit., p. 253.

<sup>41</sup> A. Rotaub, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>42</sup> F. Sobalski, *Częstochowa w latach 1826–1905*, [w:] *Dzieje Częstochowy od zarania do czasów współczesnych*, red. S. Krakowski, Katowice 1964, p. 103.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 104.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*.

environment of Częstochowa. The development of teaching has also led to the promotion of social initiatives among workers<sup>45</sup>.

The exceptions among the working population were educated individuals who had above average knowledge and skills. One such person was Bronisława Zejden. It is not known exactly in what years her diary was written. On the pages she mainly described the situation prevailing in Częstochowa since 1904 and the course of the 1905 revolution, of which she was an eyewitness. The reliability of the source records is confirmed by other sources of those events, as well as scientific studies. The events as well as the names of the participants of those events coincide with those in Bronisława Zejden – Barc's „Życiorys”<sup>46</sup>. Thanks to this, it can be concluded that it is a reliable material, enriching the very scant knowledge about the revolution in Częstochowa.

Bronisława Zejden Barc – while she was writing down her memories she was between twelve and twenty years old<sup>47</sup>. It is known that she came from a large family, had two sisters and several brothers. She presented a high level of education for the conditions surrounding her then. She wrote about herself in the following way: „In 1904 I became a supporter of the Polish socialist party, when I joined the Polish Socialist Party, I was 12 years old”<sup>48</sup>. This date is the moment when the revolutionary joined the party. This was probably due to her family's previous connections with the socialists.

The initial pages of the diary contain a description of the reasons why she shared socialist views. According to them it is possible to determine for what purposes the youngest PPS members were needed. The author's age clearly indicates that she was one of the younger party activists. The benefit of adolescence was limited criminal liability: „Because I wasn't threatened, I wouldn't be punished as a minor by tsarist thugs”<sup>49</sup>. Of course, it should be remembered that these people also suffered the consequences of their revolutionary behaviour. However, if there were no more serious legal offences, the enforcement of judgements was usually only carried out after the age of majority.

Most of the workers were reached by the press and revolutionary propaganda. It is known that in 1904 there was a development of agitational activity of PPS Częstochowa<sup>50</sup>. It is impossible to state unequivocally what had a decisive influence on the revolutionary's decision to join the socialists. However, she wrote that it was only the experiences of her life that encouraged her to party activities and socialist views:

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<sup>45</sup> W. Palus, *Polska Macierz Szkolna w Częstochowie w latach 1905–1907*, [w:] *Życie codzienne w Częstochowie w XIX i XX wieku*, red. S. Podobiński, Częstochowa 1999, p. 195.

<sup>46</sup> In the literal translation “życiorys” means biography.

<sup>47</sup> Private archive of Bartłomiej Frukacz [APBF]. B. Zejden-Barc, Biography, p. 1.

<sup>48</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>49</sup> Ibidem, p. 4.

<sup>50</sup> W. Palus, *Spoleczeństwo*, p. 21.



I had only twelve years when i started my work at the factory, and the reason for my work was that my mather became a widow, she who was in a critical situation and had to use my juvenile hands. When I became a member of the organization, the diaries of my life's practice have spinned me into socialist views [...]<sup>51</sup>.

The author emphasized the fact that her views resulted from her life experience, which directed her deeper into the socialist trend and joining the PPS.

The resume also lists information about the „Warta” factory, the place where the author of the diary worked. The industrial plant was to be within the structures of the PPS: „There wasn't a social democrat until a thousand 1906, and it was only in 1907 that the esdeks show up.”<sup>52</sup> The term „esdek” was used to describe the activists of the SDKPiL. This showed the domination of PPS party structures over the SDKPiL. Both parties cooperated in revolutionary activities. However, their views sometimes differed to an irreconcilable degree, although this was not a common occurrence:

At the time, I could have been recognized as an Esdeczka. It was a big mistake on the part of our comrades, colleagues lost me from the PPS party, and so far even to nowadays they are persecuting me as Ezdeczka. In my point of view because of the great awareness that it is not a crime when you fight for one and the same rights for liberation from the yoke of the tsarist thugs or Ezdecy or the PPS. [ . . . ] One organization ruled in Warsaw and the others ruled in St. Petersburg, for a conscious man it made no difference, the most important thing was to fight the enemy<sup>53</sup>.

This passage proves the conscious distinction between the two political parties. A noticeable trend was the determination of PPS membership, with no simultaneous exclusion of the second left-wing party. The persecution mentioned by the author indicates a lack of mutual acceptance by members of different political groups. Bronisława Barc from Zejdenów considered herself to be a politically aware person, to the extent that party affiliation in this case was not the most important. She emphasized that the seat of the SDKPiL was located in St. Petersburg and in 1906 it became an autonomous unit of the Social Democratic Workers Party of Russia<sup>54</sup>. The state of knowledge allowed her to consciously create views on the validity of the program of a given party. There is a tendency in the text for the revolutionary to fight the hostile tsarist. The reflection resulting from the notes made it possible to assess that the author's ideological view of the world coincided with the points of program PPS – Revoultionary Faction.

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<sup>51</sup> APBF, B. Zejden-Barc, Biography, p. 1.

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>53</sup> Ibidem, p. 5.

<sup>54</sup> R. Dmowski, *Polityka Polska i odbudowanie państwa*, Warsaw 2019, p. 99.

The views presented by the revolutionary about the necessity to fight the enemy at all costs along with the aspirations for independence brought her the ideological direction towards the revolutionary branch. However, she did not mention the party split anywhere in the text. In 1909, at the second PPS congress – revolutionary faction – a return to the old name was established. It should therefore be assumed that it was the revolutionary part that was understood by the revolutionary as a continuation of PPS ideological and programmatic activities. In addition, there are two sources in the family archives of the author of the text which confirm the validity of the above statements. The first is a certificate with the following content:

The Board of the Association of Veterans of Revolutionary Struggle 1905–1918. ward in Częstochowa, on the basis of evidence – testimonies of witnesses, certifies that a member of our union of goods and services, a member of the Association of Veterans of Revolutionary Struggle 1905–1918. ward in Częstochowa, is a member of the Association of Veterans of the Revolution. Barc Bronisława, born Zejden, lived in Częstochowa Old Market No. 19, since 1905 she was an active org activist. P. P. S. in Częstochowa and for her activity she was arrested by the tsarist authorities and imprisoned for a long time in 1914, evacuated to Russia and imprisoned in Moscow in 1916, sentenced to four years of Katorga, returned to Poland in 1921 [...]<sup>55</sup>.

The document issued on the basis of witnesses testimonies is an indisputable source concerning the party affiliation of Bronisława Barc-Zejden. Another is the Polish Monitor No 177/1938<sup>56</sup>. In its content there is a note about Bronisław Zejden-Barc, awarded the Cross and the Independence Medal in 1938<sup>57</sup>. The Cross awarded to the author is still in the family collection.

The crowning value of the diary is the fragments of speeches given by B. from Zejdenów Barc. They were addressed to the workers of the „Warta” factory and their comrades<sup>58</sup>. During her speech, the revolutionary explains that this is not a rebellion, as this was the name given to them by the Russian government, but a strike, and that the demands: reduction of working hours with the removal of the inspector, were most right.

<sup>55</sup> APBF, Certificate of the Board of the Association of Veterans of the Revolution 1905–1918.

<sup>56</sup> Unconquered 1918–2018: <<https://niezwyciezeni1918-2018.pl/nie/form/r44792052062338,BARC-z-Zejdenow-BRONISLAWA.html>, 8 I 2020>.

<sup>57</sup> The Order was introduced by virtue of the Ordinance of the President of the Republic of Poland on 29 October 1930 the announce of the ‘Cross of the Independence’.

<sup>58</sup> APBF, B. z Zejdenów Barc, Biography, p. 3. Alleged associates are probably members of the PPS or SDKPiL who were at the factory during a speech. Their task was to recruit as many potential revolutionaries as possible. Hence the agitation that makes the other workers understand that their actions will be a right strike. The reasoning of the speech was to contradict the voices spreading the name of the event as an unjustified rebellion on the part of the tsarist government.



Photography 1. Cross of the independence

Source: Private Archive of Frukacz' s family.

The labour inspector himself was led out of the Hall with shouts: „Long live the revolution”<sup>59</sup>. The revolutionary also stressed the fact that shouts were made by the nation<sup>60</sup>.

Speeches played an important role in the propaganda of the socialists, for example because of the widespread illiteracy among workers and peasants<sup>61</sup>. Since the beginning of the revolution, the attitude of the socialist parties has been positively oriented towards increasing the education of all social groups, i. e. the idea of universal worker's education<sup>62</sup>. It was believed that only informed workers could organize and direct a class fight. And only a worker who was eager for knowledge, who had the ability to read, write and think, in a word: enlightened<sup>63</sup>, could be realized. That is why the parties made great efforts in conducting actions for culture and education. However, the organizational weakness, resulting from the lack of legality of the action, made it very difficult to conduct cultural and educational actions. The families themselves played an important role in the creation of views, and by raising their offspring they were able to shape their worldview. In the case of the author's family, the involvement of her relatives in the party's activities is perfectly illustrated. As members of socialist cooperation she mentioned her sister Eleonora Zejden and her brothers, one of them she called: „Paris”, while about the other

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<sup>59</sup> Ibidem, p. 3. Labour inspectors (mentioned before as foremans), whose aim was to supervise and check the quality of workers' work, were particularly stigmatised during the revolution because of the frequent abuse of their competences.

<sup>60</sup> The term should be understood as gathering a large audience during the presented speech.

<sup>61</sup> W. Palus, *Spoleczeństwo*, p. 19.

<sup>62</sup> Idem, *Polska*, p. 196.

<sup>63</sup> Ibidem, p. 197.

she wrote: „Willow”, she presented herself as Bronisława Zejden with the pseudonym „Betina”<sup>64</sup>. The residual information on the activities of the rest of the family makes it impossible to reconstruct their activities.

The activity of Bronisława Zejden and her family for the revolution is highlighted in the further parts of the source. The revolutionary writes: „I was a delegate and, at the same time, a colporter in the sewing room’s branch in the Krakowska street, where I distributed factory literature. Moty, Częstochowa and Warta”<sup>65</sup>. The author herself defined her party work as a colporter, needed to expand the range of the party propaganda press. The function of a delegate was a kind of representative role of the party, at the same time it was connected with representing the interests of both the workers and the party.

Despite the conscious risk, the revolutionary woman did not stop her party activities. One of the symbols of the revolution were banners. In her biography she described the one which in 1905, 1906 and 1907 was placed on the chimney of the „Warta” factory:

The banner that was on the chimney of our factory was embroidered in my house, it was a purple silk flag [...] It was in 1905. On the 12th of May, before dinner, I gave it to comrade Otrąbkowki Stach and Kasprzak, the two of whom were putting this banner on the chimney of the Warta factory. [...] The charming socialist signs of 1906 and 1907 will blow over<sup>66</sup>.

All propaganda materials, having an informative or symbolic role, were produced under strict conspiracy only in the most trusted workers’ homes. The Zejdenów House was considered to be such, due to the participation of almost the whole family in the PPS structures.

The main expression of opposition during the 1905 revolution was the speeches. The events that took place during these events were also to some extent described by a party activist: „Not a single strike took place so that I would not be and would not participate”<sup>67</sup>. It is impossible to verify all the revolutionary’s activity, however, the outbreak of the biggest strike dates back to June 1905: „When the outbreak of the political strike began we gathered everyone from the Warta factory, we all brang everyone near Częstochowa and wait for comrades from the Racow factory”<sup>68</sup>.

Most probably it was a speech which informed workers about the outbreak of the uprising in Łódź and the arrest of workers that happened in the „Raków” factory<sup>69</sup>:

<sup>64</sup> APBF, B. Zejden -Barc, Biography, p. 4. The nicknames of the brothers mentioned in the text probably correspond to the identity of Jan Zejden and Bernat Zejden.

<sup>65</sup> Ibidem, p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>67</sup> Ibidem, p. 6–7.

<sup>68</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>69</sup> H. Rola, op. cit., p. 117.

„We were going all together with other factories it was like this: Warta, Moty, Spagaciarnia, Częstochowianka and other small factories, they joined, it was a great march where we were to march all the way to the magistrat, to demand the release of 75 comrades from the Raków factory”<sup>70</sup>. The Magistrate was the official, until 1933, definition of the executive office of local government in cities. That’s why the march was heading in his direction.

However, the aim was not achieved, because the march had been stopped earlier:

In Krakowska Street we were stopped here, [...] on the part of the government the policeman and his whole entourage approached us and asked us where and where you are going and what do you want, then we answered that the delegation was going here and the whole nation of people was going to ask about people who were unjustly arrested – for release, the government answered us: that thing will be never achieved by you<sup>71</sup>.

The size of the strike was probably quite numerous, taking into account the state of population of the then Częstochowa. This is definitely evidenced by the reaction of the Tsarist party, which bothered to send a high-ranking official like the police officer to the protesters. The text also lists people who actively participated in the strike from the party and the tsarist side:

I, as well as the whole family, Wójcikówna, Otrąbek and Grotowski, took an active part in this march, and other companions were also Raniecki [...] and it was Adam Matuszewski, unknown to me, but by his heroic act I met him as a great person<sup>72</sup>.

Adam Matuszewski was also mentioned in the gendarmerie report to the general governor of the Piotrków Governorate as a suspect in the SDKPiL or PPS<sup>73</sup>.

Bronisława Zejden participated in party work and various speeches until her arrest in 1908. In her diary she described the event as follows: „On April 10 I was arrested on a big Saturday on Warsaw Street by Arbuzov and surrounded by three guards”<sup>74</sup>. From that moment on, her fate was continuously linked to her escape from the Russian justice system. She made several attempts to escape from prisons. She also gave information about hiding in Warsaw and in the German Empire. However, she was finally captured and transported in 1914 to prisons in Russia: Kharkiv later on, Moscow, where she was sentenced to 4 years of catorship<sup>75</sup>. After serving her sentence, she returned to Poland and started a family. She died at the age of 78 in 1970.

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<sup>70</sup> APBF, B. Zejden-Barc, Biography, p. 8.

<sup>71</sup> Ibidem, p. 8–9.

<sup>72</sup> Ibidem

<sup>73</sup> A. Rotaub, op. cit., p. 139.

<sup>74</sup> APBF, B. Zejden-Barc, Biography, p. 11.

<sup>75</sup> APBF, Certificate of the Board of the Association of Veterans of the Revolution 1905–1918.

The 1905 Revolution, although not very popular, still remains one of the reasons why Poland regained its independence with the fundamental changes that came to the Polish Kingdom. Stanisław Nowak's opinion seems to be very relevant:

After 1905, the field of social life was thoroughly overturned; the vast majority of the new associations focused on those spheres that had previously been looked at from above or below; the spheres of small townspeople, small merchants, craftsmen, workers, began to organise and create a whole range of their own associations, most of them of a professional nature, but they often flourished in them, as well as club and social life [...] in a word, a comparative bird's eye view of the social life of the city before 1906 and in the years 1906–14 indicates that the revolutionary movement in 1905 did one great work – it awakened social life and brought to light the previously suppressed artificial and deeply hidden social forces<sup>76</sup>.

Research concerning 1905 should be further extended. We still have a small amount of source material. The document that was found in the family collection may not be the only one, and the discovery of similar records is still possible. Further research will provide an opportunity to enrich current knowledge. This would be a particularly good treatment for the less described areas, among which we can mention Częstochowa.



Photography 2. Bronisława Zejden with her brother and her mother

Source: Private Archive of Frukacz's family.

<sup>76</sup> W. Palus, *Spoleczeństwo*, s. 25; quote by: S. Nowak, *Z moich wspomnień*, cz. II – Częstochowa, Częstochowa 1933, p. 202–203.

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### **The Revolution of 1905 in Częstochowa – based on the memories of Bronisława Zejden**

**Summary:** The revolution of 1905 eludes simplistic and schematic interpretations. The event engulfed the Russian Empire and it spread to the territory of the Kingdom of Poland. The revolution had a complex background, but the rising discontent of the working classes and peasants played a crucial role. Political factors and opposition against Russian absolutism were equally pivotal. In the Kingdom of Poland, left-wing revolutionary forces' attempts to regain national independence and sovereignty strongly contributed to the insurgency. The most significant acts of rebellion took place in the major Russian cities and the Vistula Country that had been incorporated into Imperial Russia. The key metropolitan areas at the beginning of the 20th century were St. Petersburg, Warsaw, Riga, Łódź as well as Częstochowa. The revolution of 1905 attracts considerable interest and stirs much controversy among contemporary historians. The events surrounding the revolution have been well documented by the existing research into worker movements and the history of political parties. However, not all sources have been identified and published, which creates new opportunities for expanding the existing knowledge. One of such undiscovered sources is a short diary of Bronisława Barc (née Zejden) who participated in the strikes in Częstochowa

**Keywords:** revolution, political parties, revolutionaries, workers, Częstochowa, Bronisława Zejden