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The experience of the "anti-Zionist campaign" from the autobiographical perspective of its victims

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Abstract
The aim of this article is to deepen the reflection on the ways in which the events of March '68 in Poland are described by those who were targeted by the brutal anti-Semitic campaign of the period. The main analytical category used here is "experience" as proposed by Martin Jay, in which the distinction between Erfahrung and Erlebnis is of fundamental importance. The proposed analysis is primarily based on the previously unused interviews with members of what is known as the "post-March emigration" collected at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. Those are extensively supplemented by references to the already published "March '68 narratives" gathered by, among others, Joanna Wiszniewicz, Krystyna Naszkowska and Mikołaj Grynberg. This approach made it possible to propose a new, four-component typology of the experience of the "anti-Zionist campaign" and highlighted potential gaps in our knowledge about the perspective of the victims of the so-called March events in Poland.

Key words
1968, March '68, emigration, exile, experience, Erfahrung, Erlebnis, Martin Jay, memory studies

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> I don't know if I ever got used to this situation. Seeking refuge deprives a person of a sense of normality. It is as if the eye has lost vision and there is a constant need for some correction. Once you leave, you are never at home again.
>
> Irena Grudzińska-Gross, 2018

March '68 vs the Global Sixty-Eighth[1]

From the Polish perspective, the events of the year 1968 appear to be a much more complex phenomenon than from the Western point of view. In the West, this was primarily an anti-establishment youth revolt and the beginning of profound social and political changes, usually referred to as the Cultural Revolution. In Poland, too, the youth rebellion component of 1968 is clearly discernible; however, as their main enemy the protesters perceived not the "bourgeois mentality" of the older generations and the social and political order those generations had established, but above all the censorship and brutality of the Communist regime. Perhaps even more confusing for observers from the Western side of the Iron Curtain, the year 1968 in Poland – commonly referred to as the March events (Polish: *wydarzenia marcowe*)[2] or simply March '68 (Polish: *Marzec '68*) – was also marked by a widespread anti-Semitic campaign that forced several thousand Polish Jews to leave the country, as well as by a power struggle within the Communist ranks.[3]

Fortunately, a person currently undertaking an analysis of different dimensions of the Polish 1968 cannot complain of an absence of serious reference points that make this task much easier. Thanks to the efforts of, among others, Jakub Karpiński, Jerzy Eisler, Piotr Osęka, Marcin Zaremba, Dariusz Stola, Andrzej Friszke, Dariusz

1 This paper was written as part of a research project financed by the National Science Centre entitled "Anti-Zionist campaign 1967–1968: a new synthesis" (contract no. 2021/41/B/HS3/00286). For all critical comments and bibliographic suggestions, I would like to thank the participants of this project, Magdalena Semczyszyn and Dariusz Stola, as well as Rafał Stobiecki, and the two anonymous reviewers.

2 The additional context is the fact that the phrases *wydarzenia marcowe* or *wypadki marcowe* (March incidents) were preferred and very frequently used by those past masters at not calling things by their true names: the Communist propagandists.

3 On the issue of similarities and differences between 1968 on two sides of the Iron Curtain, see for example: J. Eisler, *The March Events of 1968*, "Bulletin of the German Historical Institute", Supplement no. 6 (2009), pp. 167–170; M. Zaremba, *1968 in Poland: The Rebellion on the Other Side of the Looking Glass*, "The American Historical Review", no. 3 (2018), pp. 769–772; K. Jasiewicz, *Generation '68 in Poland (with a Czechoslovak Comparative Perspective): Introduction*, "East European Politics and Societies", no. 4 (2019), pp. 817–832; M. Fidelis, *Imagining the World from Behind the Iron Curtain: Youth and the Global Sixties in Poland*, Oxford–New York 2022. It is important to stress in this context that, from the perspective of Jasiewicz and Fidelis in particular, the Polish 1968 is above all a fragment of the "Global Sixties". In this approach, the problem of the political and cultural generation rooted in 1968 comes to the fore.

Libionka, Agnieszka Skalska, Bożena Szaynok, Hans-Christian Dahlman, and recently Anat Plocker, our understanding of the political, social and cultural mechanisms of the March events in Poland is rich, although certainly – as in the case of each of major political crises in the history of Poland under the Communist rule often labelled as various "Polish months"[4] – this does not mean that the problem of March '68 can be considered definitively closed from a research point of view.[5]

The above assertion becomes particularly important in the context of the brutal and widespread "anti-Zionist campaign" of 1968 in Poland. We should also keep in mind that the initial phase of it took place in the first months after the Six-Day War of 1967, then reached the apogee in March and April (hence March '68) of the following year, and declined in June and July of the same year, 1968, when the secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party Władysław Gomułka ordered official media and the party apparatus to stop targeting "Zionists". Yet it must also be borne in mind that the post-March emigration of more than 13,000 Polish Jews ended nearly two years later, when the wave of departures from Poland reduced dramatically as a result of, among other reasons, top-down decisions taken by the authorities of the People's Republic of Poland, which – as Dariusz Stola has written extensively[6] – made it practically impossible to leave the country.

4 In terms of political history, Poland's post-war history is most often presented as a series of crises in the relationship between power and society, and at the same time as internal crises within the ruling Communist Party. For example, when seen from this perspective, October '56 marks the end of Stalinism in Poland and Władysław Gomułka's return to power, December '70 means the regime's bloody crackdown on workers protesting against price rises and the end of Gomułka's rule, while August '80 is the birth of Solidarity and the end of Edward Gierek, Gomułka's successor as party leader.

5 J. Karpiński, *Wykres gorączki: Polska pod rządami komunistycznymi*, Lublin 2001, pp. 171–248; J. Eisler, *Marzec 1968: geneza, przebieg, konsekwencje*, Warszawa 1991; *idem*, *Polski rok 1968*, Warszawa 2006; P. Osęka, *Syjoniści, inspiratorzy, wichrzyciele: obraz wroga w propagandzie marca 1968*, Warszawa 1998; *idem*, *Marzec '68*, Kraków 2008; D. Stola, *Kampania antysyjonistyczna w Polsce 1967–1968*, Warszawa 2000; *idem*, *Anti-Zionism as a Multipurpose Policy Instrument: The Anti-Zionist Campaign in Poland, 1967–1968*, "Journal of Israeli History", no. 1 (2006), pp. 175–201; A. Friszke, *Anatomia buntu: Kuroń, Modzelewski i komandosi*, Kraków 2010; *idem*, *Rok 1968: koniec i początek*, "Studia Politologiczne", no. 2 (2018), pp. 167–190; M. Kula, M. Zaremba, P. Osęka (eds.), *Marzec 1968: Trzydzieści lat później*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1998; D. Libionka, *Brakujące ogniwo. Sowiecka literatura antysyjonistyczna w Polsce przed i po Marcu 1968*, in T. Szarota (ed.), *Komunizm: Ideologia – system – ludzie*, Warszawa 2001, pp. 272–288; A. Skalska, *Obraz wroga w antysemickich rysunkach prasowych marca '68*, Warszawa 2007; H-Ch. Dahlmann, *Antysemityzm w Polsce roku 1968: między partią a społeczeństwem*, Warszawa 2018; A. Plocker, *The expulsion of Jews from communist Poland: memory wars and homeland anxieties*, Bloomington 2022. At the same time, quite a number of analyses of March '68 in its local dimensions are available, as well as some source editions focusing on the March events, see, for example, K. Rokicki, S. Stępień (eds.), *Oblicza Marca 1968*, Warszawa 2004; E. Krasucki, *Żydowski Marzec '68 w Szczecinie*, Szczecin 2008; S.M. Nowinowski (ed.), *Marzec '68 w Łodzi*, Łódź 2010.

6 D. Stola, *Emigracja pomarcowa*, Warszawa 2000; *idem*, *Kraj bez wyjścia: Migracje z Polski 1949–1989*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 219–231.

Nevertheless, my objective here is not to examine the trajectory or the political and social background of the anti-Semitic campaign of 1968 in Poland; instead, my main focus is on how anti-Semitic dimension of March '68 was (and still is) experienced by its victims. The researchers who have addressed this problem are – in addition to Dariusz Stola and Piotr Osęka – Kamila Chylińska, Marcin Starnawski, Marek Szajda, Anna Artwińska, Alina Molisak, Przemysław Czapliński, Dorota Dąbrowska, Anna Wal, or most recently Filip Mazurczak.[7] However, the studies by these authors – with the exception of one text by Szajda, which will be discussed below – contain no in-depth definition of 'experience' as an analytical category, and their central research problem is, on the one hand, various dimensions of anti-Semitic violence, and on the other, the equally important question of the impact of March '68 on the identity of its victims.[8]

7 K. Chylińska, *Emigracja polska po 1967 r.*, "Kultura", no. 11 (1970), pp. 17–55; M. Starnawski, *Socjalizacja i tożsamość żydowska w Polsce powojennej: narracje emigrantów z pokolenia marca '68*, Wrocław 2016; *idem*, *Przestrzenie wygnania w autobiograficznych narracjach emigrantek z pokolenia Marca '68*, "Przegląd Kulturoznawczy", no. 4 (2017), pp. 537–556; *idem*, *Pokolenie Marca '68 na wygnaniu: wzory integracji i zmiany identyfikacyjne*, "Kwartalnik Historii Żydów", no. 2 (2019), pp. 389–416; M. Szajda, *Obraz Polski wśród polskich Żydów w Izraelu. Narracje przedstawicieli aliji gomułkowskiej i emigracji pomarcowej*, "Wrocławski Rocznik Historii Mówionej", vol. 8 (2018), pp. 143–177; *idem*, *Żydowska pamięć o Polsce lat 1967–1968. Analiza doświadczeń i emocji na podstawie wybranych wspomnień*, "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka", no. 1 (2019), pp. 43–79; *idem*, *"Out of Poland, Not to Israel, but Out of Poland": Factors Influencing the Decision to Leave Poland after March 1968: On the Basis of Research from the 1970s*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny", no. 5 (2021), pp. 105–129; A. Artwińska, *"Odrodziły się traumy z czasów Zagłady". Marzec 1968 jako narracja postkatastroficzna*, "Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne. Seria Literacka", no. 25 (2015), pp. 187–208; A. Molisak, P. Czapliński (eds.), *Tożsamość po pogromie: świadectwa i interpretacje Marca '68*, Warszawa 2019; D. Dąbrowska, *March'68 from the perspective of victims – approximations (Baral, Naszkowska, Grynberg)*, "Papers in Linguistics", no. 8 (2020), pp. 213–228; A. Wal, *Wygnańcy 1968 roku w świetle listów Felicji Bromberg, Anny Frajlich, Władysława Zająca*, in W. Ligęza, J. Pasterska (eds.), *Tu jestem / zamieszkuję własne życie: studia i szkice o twórczości Anny Frajlich*, Kraków 2018, pp. 373–383; F. Mazurczak, *Why we stayed: Polish Jews' reasons for remaining in Poland during two waves of postwar emigration*, "Wrocławski Rocznik Historii Mówionej", vol. 13 (2023), pp. 108–134. The already mentioned Marek Szajda also spares no effort to compile and make available to a wider group of researchers the testimonies of the post-March émigrés he has found; *idem*, *Amalia Reisenthel: „Polska to kraj, w którym rozmawiam bez akcentu"*, "Wrocławski Rocznik Historii Mówionej", vol. 9 (2019), pp. 195–234; *idem*, *Epilog "Historii złudzeń". Obraz Polski w latach 1944–1968 we wspomnieniach Klemensa Nussbauma*, "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka", no. 3 (2019), pp. 137–163; *idem*, *„Pożegnanie z Polską". Wspomnienia Artura Schneidera z lat 1967–1972*, "Studia Żydowskie. Almanach", no. 9–10 (2020), pp. 149–170; A. Schneider, *Stracone lata*, M. Szajda ed., Lublin 2019.

8 M. Szajda, *Żydowska pamięć...* In my earlier research on the local dimensions of the memory of March '68, I also took the category of experience for granted and did not conceptualise it in depth, see: A. Czyżewski, *The Myths of March '68: Conflicts of Memory in Contemporary Poland*, in A. Konarzewska, A. Nakai, M. Przeperski (eds.), *Unsettled 1968: Origins – Myth – Impact*, New York–London 2020, pp. 163–187; *idem*, *„Marcowe mity" a pamięć komunikacyjna polskiego społeczeństwa*, "Sensus Historiae", no. 2 (2023), pp. 15–28; *idem*, *A Generation, or the Ordering of History – The Case of the Year 1968 in Poland*, "Sensus Historiae", no. 3 (2023), pp. 33–49; *idem*, *Pokolenie czy pokolenia Marca '68 – między oral history a metodą biograficzną*, "Historyka. Studia Metodologiczne", vol. 55 (2025) [in print].

Multiple sources?

Before turning to the main issue of the March '68 experiences, it is necessary to pause for a moment and consider what sources are available in order to address this problem. First of all, there are the autobiographical statements written by members of the post-March emigration, such as Henryk Dasko, Sabina Baral, Anna Frajlich, Maciej Zaremba Bielawski, Włodek Goldkorn, Artur Schneider, Anna Grinzweig Jacobsson, Janka Kaempfer Louis, Helena Lindskog and Michael Sobelman. The vast majority of the above are men and women who were on the threshold of adulthood when the anti-Semitic campaign in Poland broke out, or had only been adults for a few years. This is an important circumstance for understanding the complexity of the research problem of the March '68 experiences, to which I will return later.[9]

Another group of sources that can be used are the equally important collections of accounts of people marked by the "anti-Zionist campaign," collected and then developed – not in every case with strictly scientific rigor – by, among others, Joanna Wiszniewicz, Teresa Torańska, Krystyna Naszkowska, Agata Tuszyńska and Mikołaj Grynberg.[10] In this group, the experience which comes to the fore is that of the "March youth" who left the country after 1968. Their point of view is complemented by the memories of people who, despite a growing threat and then, after a certain point, the openly hostile atmosphere, did not decide to leave Poland. The key studies here are those by Wiszniewicz and Grynberg, who made this experience the structural axis of their books.[11]

9 H. Dasko, *Dworzec Gdański: Historia niedokończona*, Kraków 2008; S. Baral, *Zapiski z wygnania*, Kraków–Budapeszt 2018; F. Bromberg, A. Frajlich, K. Zając, *Po Marcu: Wiedeń, Rzym, Nowy Jork*, Warszawa 2008; M. Zaremba Bielawski, *Dom z dwiema wieżami*, tr. M. Kalinowski, Kraków 2018; W. Goldkorn, *Osioł Mesjasza*, tr. J. Malawska, Wołowiec 2020; A. Schneider, *op. cit.*; A. Grinzweig Jacobsson, *Ucieczka na Marstrand*, tr. M. Kalinowski, Warszawa 2022; J. Kaempfer Louis, *Adieu Varsovie*, tr. K. Marczewska, Lublin–Niemce 2023; H. Lindskog, *Miejsce urodzenia: Dzierżoniów*, Kraków–Budapest–Syracuse 2023; M. Sobelman, *Dowody tożsamości*, Kraków–Budapest–Syracuse 2023.

10 J. Wiszniewicz, *Z Polski do Izraela: Rozmowy z pokoleniem '68*, Warszawa 1992; *eadem*, *Życie przecięte: opowieści pokolenia Marca*, Wołowiec 2009; T. Torańska, *Jesteśmy: Rozstania '68*, Warszawa 2008; K. Naszkowska, *Wygnani do raju: Szwedzki azyl*, Warszawa 2017; *eadem*, *Ani tu, ani tam: Marzec '68: powroty*, Warszawa 2018; M. Grynberg, *Księga wyjścia*, Wołowiec 2018; A. Tuszyńska, *Bagaż osobisty: po Marcu*, Warszawa 2018.

11 J. Wiszniewicz, *Życie przecięte...*; M. Grynberg, *op. cit*. A pioneering work that considers the diverse spectrum of March experiences – including those of émigrés and those who stayed in Poland – is the study edited by Anna Mieszczanek, created in the circle of the then underground and uncensored journal "Karta". However, it is also worth noting that most of the accounts included therein come from the Warsaw circle of the so-called commandos; in other words, these materials offer a specific view of the situation, a view from the centre of the March events, as it were; see A. Mieszczanek (ed.), *Krajobraz po szoku*, Warszawa 1989.

Of course, nothing precludes making a reference to other published memories of those Polish Jews who remained in Poland after the March events. But while it is more or less clear where the testimonies of the post-March émigrés can be found, an attempt to find the voices of those who stayed in Poland despite the anti-Semitic witch-hunt will mostly be a blind search.[12]

Therefore, an assessment of the available source database quickly reveals a significant predominance of the voices of those victims of "Anti-Zionist campaign" who eventually left Poland, their decision prompted by the extensive hate campaign of 1967–1968 and the various types of harassment that accompanied it. This observation should not cause anyone to discredit their perspective. However, it seems that this issue is potentially of considerable importance for the problem of March *Erfarhung* discussed here, since approximately the same number of Polish Jews remained in Poland after March '68 – which they did for various reasons and often contrary to their feelings at the time.[13]

One more remark that must be added at this point seems particularly important in the context of the considerations presented herein; namely, that both the voices of those who left Poland and those who ultimately stayed in the country were for decades almost completely absent from the Polish collective memory. March '68, like every political crisis in the People's Republic of Poland, was consistently tabooed by the Communist regime. This top-down "erasure" – sanctioned by appropriate censorship provisions – had a particularly strong impact on the anti-Semitic dimension of the 1967–1968 campaign. Also, after 1989, the perspective of the Jewish victims of March '68 was not explored in the public space to any considerable extent. The March events were classified primarily as another link in the chain of "Polish months"; a tangible manifestation of social resistance against the oppressive Communist authorities. The problem of the anti-Semitic campaign at that time, and above all the issue of public support for it among "ordinary Poles", aroused (and still arouses) considerable controversy, also in the academic community. Worse still, this issue continues to be used in political debate as a tool for building public support, the key element of which has been the heroic vision of the Polish history, including – as Joanna Wawrzyniak phrased it – the myth of "Polish innocence", i.e. the default assumption that the Polish nation was always, invariably, victimised and never an oppressor. This imperative has been especially valid, and

12 H. Vogler, *Autoportret z pamięci. Cz. 3: Dojrzałość*, Kraków 1981; J. Aleksandrowicz, E. Stawowy, *Tyle wart człowiek…*, Lublin 1992; M. Orwid, *Przeżyć… i co dalej? Rozmawiają Katarzyna Zimmerer i Krzysztof Szwajca*, Kraków 2006; E. Leibel, *Wspomnienia Żydówki krakowskiej*, M. Kłańska (ed.), Kraków 2010.

13 A. Kichelewsky, *A Community under Pressure: Jews in Poland, 1957–1967*, "Polin", vol. 21 (2008), pp. 163–164; D. Stola, *Kraj bez wyjścia…*, pp. 221, 436.

decisively enforced, in the context of the Second World War and the Polish-Jewish relations;[14] one of the latest examples of this practice was the official fiftieth anniversary of March '68, organised by the PiS government and strongly promoted by the media supporting it. According to this narrative, the damage done to the remnants of Polish Jews who survived the Holocaust should be blamed solely on the Communist regime, and in no way on their Polish neighbours, co-workers or schoolmates. For most victims of the "anti-Zionist campaign", this *de facto* means a renewed victimisation and an invalidation of their traumatic experiences.[15]

To return to the issues of sources, however: the publications mentioned above certainly do not exhaust the list of potential sources that can be used to attempt to deal with the multidimensional problem of the experience of the "anti-Zionist campaign". At this point, it is worthwhile to note the many years of efforts of the team of the "Grodzka Gate – NN Theatre" Centre in documenting the Jewish past of Lublin, including the post-March emigration from this city. Records of the March experiences can also be found in the collections of the Oral History Archive at the History Meeting House in Warsaw, the USC Shoah Foundation, Fortunoff Video Archive, and Yad Vashem.

The starting point for the following analysis, however, shall be interviews available at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews (hereafter: POLIN). This is a collection of interviews conducted at roughly the same time (2016–2019) as part of a project whose aim was to commemorate the March events. Moreover, they were collected by professionals with extensive experience in oral history and in-depth methodological self-awareness, thanks to which the research questionnaire was treated in terms of certain general dispositions rather than a rigid script; as a consequence, the source material retrieved has the character of an individual in-depth interview with extensive autobiographical passages.[16] The respondents

14 This issue is of great importance in the context of the anti-Semitic dimension of March '68, when one of the key aspects of the anti-Semitic campaign in the media was the narrative of the alleged "Jewish ingratitude for Polish help during the German occupation". In a broader sense, the myth of "Polish innocence" is linked to the problem of the Communist regime's search for legitimacy by appealing to Poles' sense of national pride; for more information, see J. Wawrzyniak, *Veterans, Victims, and Memory: The Politics of the Second World War in Communist Poland*, tr. S. Lewis, Frankfurt am Main–Bern–Bruxelles–New York–Oxford–Warszawa–Wien 2015, pp. 196–211; M. Zaremba, *Communism–Legitimacy–Nationalism: Nationalist Legitimization of the Communist Regime in Poland*, Frankfurt am Main–Bern–Bruxelles–New York–Oxford–Warszawa–Wien 2019, pp. 245–331; A. Plocker, *op. cit.*, pp. 65–92, 164–166.

15 A. Czyżewski, *The Myths...*, pp. 169–171; M. Kobielska, *History and Memory of 1968 in Poland: Debates Around the 'Estranged '68' Exhibition*, "Cultures of History Forum", 28/09/2018, https://www.cultures-of-history.uni-jena.de/debates/history-and-memory-of-1968-in-poland?type=9999 [accessed: 24.12.2023].

16 POLIN employees have access to, among others, an oral history textbook developed especially for their needs, authored by Dobrochna Kałwa and Joanna Wawrzyniak, whose achievements in the field of oral history cannot be overestimated. I would like to thank the head of the Digital Collections Dissemination Department at POLIN, Joanna Król-Komła, for helping me access materials from the collections of the museum.

themselves were also a coherent group, the vast majority of them classifiable as the generation of post-March emigration, i.e. persons born in the years 1945–1954 and socialised in the People's Republic of Poland who, as a result of the "anti-Zionist campaign", left their former homeland with a one-way ticket.[17] This is, therefore, a coherent source material, largely comparable to previous analyses in this area, primarily those by Starnawski and Szajda, who also based their work on certain collections of testimonies of post-March émigrés. It must be emphasised that the POLIN source material has so far never been used in analyses of the type presented herein, and this makes it particularly valuable. I am fully aware that the alleged homogeneity of the research group may be the largest shortcoming of the proposed analysis. I will return to this issue later, as it seems to me that it concerns most research on the broadly understood March experience and is extremely rarely expressed directly.

"Songs of Experience"

The already mentioned category of "experience" itself remains to be clarified. The matter is not as obvious as it might seem at first glance, as evidenced by the sheer size of the study by the historian of ideas Martin Jay, *Songs of Experience*, whose advice I would like to follow here. Jay draws attention to a certain paradox that is difficult to overcome. Experience is most often used to describe something that remains highly individual and therefore escapes attempts at description and linguistic conventions. Therefore, experience is beyond the boundaries of cognition and as such, it is also inaccessible to its (external) observers. At the same time, however – and this seems to be the importance of his approach – Jay insists that this paradox must be tamed. Its existence should by acknowledged; yet a yielding to it cannot be an option. This approach leads Jay to the following conclusion:

> [...] we need to be aware of the ways in which "experience" is both a collective linguistic concept, a signifier that yokes together a class of heterogeneous signifieds located in a diacritical force field, and a reminder that such concepts always leave a remainder that escapes their homogenizing grasp. "Experience," we might say, is at the nodal point of the intersection between public language and private subjectivity, between expressible commonalities and the ineffability of the individual interior. Although something that has to be undergone or suffered rather than acquired vicariously, **even the most seemingly "authentic" or "genuine" experience may be already inflected by prior cultural models** [...] [all highlights are mine – A.C.]. Experience may also be made available for others through a process of post

17 The title of the project undertaken by POLIN is "Participants and witnesses of March '68". The natural context of this endeavour was the fiftieth anniversary of March '68 and the exhibition planned by museum for this occasion along with accompanying events, including educational ones; for a synthetic description of this collection, see https://sztetl.org.pl/pl/historia-mowiona/E?field_sh_projects_tid%5B%5D=265 [accessed: 17.11.2023].

> facto recounting, a kind of secondary elaboration in the Freudian sense, which turns it into a meaningful narrative. When shared, **such reconstructions and recountings of experience can become the stuff of group identities**, as the so-called consciousness-raising exercises of feminists showed. When thwarted, they may lead to the traumatic blockage that has been called unclaimed experience.[18]

Thus, even though he customarily works in a fundamentally different research paradigm, Jay redirects his own understanding of experience into the area of memory studies. This intuition is also intensified by the distinction between two varieties of experience: *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*, the former of which, as he writes, "connotes a progressive, if not always smooth, movement over time, which is implied by the *Fahrt* (journey) embedded in *Erfahrung* and the linkage with the German word for danger (*Gefahr*). As such, it activates a link between memory and experience, which subtends the belief that cumulative experience can produce a kind of wisdom that comes only at the end of the day."[19]

In other words, I treat interviews with the victims of March '68 as manifestations of an authentic "March *Erfahrung*", yet at the same time I remember that the latter must constantly be positioned in relation to the inexpressible "March *Erlebnis*". I am not interested in confronting these experiences with historical realities and determining the degree of their truthfulness. My primary objective is to analyse how members of the post-March emigration milieu portray their personal histories through the lens of the "anti-Zionist campaign". To do so, I have decided to seek answers to two questions, which in my opinion are crucial and mutually complementary, namely, how the respondents perceived the events unfolding around them, and under what circumstances they made the decision to either leave Poland or stay in the country.

My analysis leads to the conclusion that the available accounts of members of the broadly understood generation of post-March émigrés evince at least four dominant ways of experiencing those events, the key context of which turns out to be the fact of leaving or staying in Poland. These ways of experiencing will be presented below.

18 M. Jay, *Songs of Experience: Modern American and European Variations on a Universal Theme*, Berkeley 2005, pp. 6–7.

19 *Ibidem*, p. 11. Cf. D. Wolska, *Doświadczenie*, in M. Saryusz-Wolska, R. Traba (eds.), *Modi memorandi: Leksykon kultury pamięci*, Warszawa 2014, pp. 94–99; M. Jarząbek, *Kategoria doświadczenia w interpretacji nagrań historii mówionej*, "Wrocławski Rocznik Historii Mówionej", vol. 10 (2020), pp. 38–52. Marek Szajda, in turn, in the previously mentioned text, places the problem of the March experience "in the tradition of the anthropology of experience and emotions"; therefore, he is primarily interested in the issue of the emotional charge contained in the language/linguistic constructions of people reporting their experiences from the period of March '68; see M. Szajda, *Żydowska pamięć...*, pp. 45–50.

The March experience, type 1: "We didn't leave, we were made to leave"

In the first way of experiencing the March events, the "anti-Zionist campaign" is perceived primarily as a brutal expulsion from the national community. From the perspective of those attacked, March '68 meant, above all, violence, both symbolic and physical, directed by the Polish majority against a weaker Jewish minority deprived of the tools to defend itself. It meant also, or perhaps above all, a deepening sense of loneliness and alienation. Emilia Białostocka Degenius, one of Krystyna Naszkowska's interlocutors, describes her feelings at that time:

> Suddenly, after 1967, my whole situation at school changed; instead of A's, I started getting C's. First, it was one teacher, then another, then another. I lost all my friends. My best friend Małgosia told me one day that her parents wouldn't let her talk to me. The teacher told me I wasn't allowed to eat lunch at school. She said I was dressed very elegantly, my trousers were made of very good material, my mother was also very well dressed, which meant we were rich, and I wasn't entitled to a school lunch. In winter, the whole class went skiing, but I was not allowed to go to this camp. It became very unpleasant and difficult at school. I was very lonely.[20]

Nina Himelstein, who in 1968 was studying at the Medical Academy in Łódź, fifty years later shared with Mikołaj Grynberg the following reflection: "Łódź was very anti-Semitic at that time. The newspapers only wrote about who they had fired. It wasn't very nice at the college either. Everyone moved away from me. I would sit on a bench with a friend who was also Jewish, and everyone else was avoiding us."[21]

Amalia Reisenthel's account very clearly shows that understood in this way, the March experience in many cases represented a traumatic process stretched over time, the final act of which was the submitting of an application for permission to leave Poland.[22] In 1968, Amalia was in the fourth year of extremely demanding and prestigious architectural studies in Wrocław. She had a scholarship and real prospects for a future career at the university, which was her dream. Her parents lost their jobs as part of the anti-Semitic purge, but they decided that their daughters should complete the stages of education they had already started (Amalia's younger sister was then in the third grade of high school). It was therefore clear

20 K. Naszkowska, *Wygnani do raju…*, pp. 191–192.

21 M. Grynberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 84–85.

22 The procedure for leaving Poland during the "anti-Zionist campaign" required applicants to renounce their Polish citizenship. For this reason, the authorities did not issue them Polish passports but only "travel documents", according to which on the point of crossing the Polish border they were already recognised as stateless persons. The issue of restoring citizenship to the post-March émigrés has never been resolved systematically by the Polish government, even after the fall of Communism; in other words, all those who were effectively deprived of their Polish citizenship at that time must apply for it. It is hardly surprising that for many members of this group, this type of solution means a return to the trauma from over fifty years ago and to some extent even a posthumous triumph of their then persecutors.

to them that despite the severity of the repression they faced, the family would remain in Poland, at least for some time. At the height of the student rebellion in March '68, Amalia was in hospital due to a previously planned laryngological procedure, so she did not take part in the strike at her *alma mater*, the University of Science and Technology in Wrocław. But even this fact did not protect her from another painful confrontation with reality, one coming from a side she had not expected it to come – her university friends who visited her in the hospital told her: "Maybe it's a good thing that they're operating on your nose, so it won't be obvious that you're Jewish," and "They won't charge us that you're a provocateur, so it's good that you're away from us."[23] Amalia, recalling these scenes years later, said: "And I didn't know then whether it was supposed to be a compliment or whether it was... also a bit humiliating. Then the ambivalent feelings began: that I was someone else, or was being perceived differently; because until that time I had been growing up homogeneously with everyone else."[24] In her case, the final straw came a year later, during the events related to her graduation. Despite having obtained a high grade on her diploma, not one member of the examination board congratulated her. One of the younger board members explained to her afterwards that her professors were reluctant to tell her directly that due to her Jewish heritage, she would not be offered the previously promised position at the university. Only then did Amalia's family make the final decision to leave the country:

> Well, it was really... my first personal shock back then. I came home, we sat together and saw that there was no future for us. My parents had been laid off from their jobs of twenty-five years. I had no future in my profession, [...] the "Prague Spring" had been suppressed, with the help of... with the participation of the Polish Army as well. So, all the ideals that could still be in our hearts became invalid and then we submitted our papers to leave Poland.[25]

It is clearly visible from this that to many of its participants, the post-March emigration was not a free choice, but a consequence of hostile signals coming from the Polish environment on both the institutional and personal level. Amalia herself concludes this thread of her story about the experience of March '68: "That departure from Poland was not 100% voluntary, it was provoked, forced, because I could have said: I will not leave. But **it was provoked, and I was forced into**

23 Digital Collections Dissemination Department of the POLIN Museum of Polish Jews [hereinafter: DUZC POLIN], Interview with Amalia Reisenthel conducted by Józef Markiewicz, Warszawa, 19 March 2019.

24 *Ibidem*.

25 *Ibidem*.

a situation when I didn't have much chance to stay in Poland, to be a free person; and yet in the West I could fulfil most of my plans."[26]

Leaving Poland, therefore, turns out to have been, in fact, an inevitable consequence of, on the one hand, the conformity of the Polish society, which fit into the political climate of the era, and, on the other, the violence suffered at the hands of its members. Larissa Baldvoin, who in March '68 was thirteen and lived with her parents in Gliwice, recalled in this context:

> And when the Jews started leaving after March '68, my parents didn't even dream of doing this, they didn't think about it. But one day they were returning from the Silesian Operetta and a gang of youngsters attacked them and started shouting: "Jews to Israel!" Because my father... My mother was a very beautiful woman and often, when she was working at a *Ruch* kiosk,[27] men would come to her and say: "What are you doing with this Jew, ma'am? You're so beautiful". So, so Dad said, "That's it!" And the next day they went to Warsaw to arrange for their papers [i.e. to get an official permission to leave Poland – A.C.].[28]

A similar theme of gradually coming to the decision to emigrate as a result of hostile signals coming from the Polish society forms the *leitmotif* of many other March stories. Władysław Bibrowski, involved in the March '68 student unrest at Warsaw University of Technology, completed his studies only thanks to the significant help of his direct supervisors. Due to his Jewish origin and participation in student protests, Bibrowski became the object of a personal attack from the "March propaganda". He was not imprisoned, but – like many other students

26 *Ibidem*. One of Krystyna Naszkowska's interlocutors, Janusz Marchwiński, explaining the background of his decision to leave Poland, relates the following story: "My brother Władysław, who is a violinist, graduated with honours from the conservatory. He was promised an assistantship at Łódź Conservatory of Music. He couldn't get a job anywhere. He won the competition to join Capella Bydgostiensis. This ensemble was soon to go on a tour of Yugoslavia. And my brother received a message from them that unfortunately he would not be able to go with them. He applied for a position at the Koszalin Philharmonic and was accepted there. But after some time, the answer came again that they could not employ him. No one said: 'You're a Jew, so get the fuck out' but simply the living space and the possibility of existence were taken away. I and many others were simply forced to leave this country"; see K. Naszkowska, *Ani tu, ani...*, pp. 102–103. Włodek Kofman, in turn, in a conversation with Teresa Torańska about his experience of March '68, simply says: "I felt expelled," and after a while he adds: "I know, of course, that '68 was done by the Security Service. It's all true. And by the Polish United Workers' Party; that's also true. But..."; see T. Torańska, *Jesteśmy: Rozstania '68*, Warszawa 2008, p. 82.

27 In Communist Poland, "Ruch" was a state-controlled nationwide chain of kiosks selling, among others, newspapers, cigarettes, public transport tickets, small toys and beauty products.

28 DUZC POLIN, Interview with Larissa Baldvoin conducted by Wioletta Wejman, Lublin, 6 July 2017.

– he was subject to disciplinary proceedings at the university. Despite those circumstances, his academic mentors (unlike Amalia's) did not back down and did everything to enable him to take his subsequent exams and write his diploma thesis at the same time. As a consequence, as the narrator himself ironically comments, "I was kicked out of the college. However, again, professors of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of Warsaw University of Technology, including Prof. Latek, made sure that I was expelled from college after obtaining my master's degree in engineering [*laughter*]."[29] Władysław's statement is only superficially illogical. The narrator reveals that his mentors at Warsaw University of Technology did not give in to political pressure and, what is more, they played an effective game with the system, with his future at stake. What procedural tricks they used cannot be ascertained; but they certainly manipulated the situation in such a way that the final decision to expel Władysław from the university was made when he was already a fresh graduate. It was, therefore, thanks to them that Władysław could still hope for a relatively "normal" life in Poland. He received his desired diploma and, like every other graduate in the People's Republic of Poland, he was officially directed to work at a specific workplace. Everything pointed to "anti-Zionist campaign" being just a shadow in his past. After some time, however, Władysław experienced yet another harsh collision with the realities of anti-Semitic persecution in a police state:

> One day I was called by the secretary of the Basic Party Organisation,[30] who began to explain to me, or rather express his surprise that I was here. I am of Jewish origin, after all – because by then he knew it – so why am I in Poland at all? I should go, well, to Israel, that's where I belong. Hmm, that got me thinking. Well, I don't know how long after that, [...] I decided to leave after all.[31]

Emotions that had an enormous bearing not only on people's state of mind and perception of reality, but also on their decisions about what to do next, were not

29 DUZC POLIN, Interview with Władysław Bibrowski conducted by Józef Markiewicz, Warszawa, 2 Nov. 2017. A similar theme of support received by students at risk of expulsion from their studies just before their graduation also appears in Aleksander Włodawer's account; see DUZC POLIN, Interview with Aleksander Włodawer conducted by Przemysław Kaniecki, Warszawa, 2 June 2017, and the story by Barbara Dąbrowska [pseud.] published by the uncensored underground publishing house "Karta"; see *Krajobraz po szoku...*, p. 69.

30 Podstawowa Organizacja Partyjna [POP] PZPR – a Basic Party Organisation [BPO] of the Polish United Workers' Party was the lowest organisational unit of the Communist party in Poland. Every workplace, from the smallest factories to the largest research institutes, was supposed to have one. The BPO exercised 'ideological guardianship' over the workplace itself and its employees, including the prerogative of co-deciding on hiring and firing.

31 *Krajobraz po szoku...*, p. 69.

only the feeling of growing alienation, but also the equally disintegrating fear. In an interview given to POLIN, Joanna Rose clearly emphasises that the main driving force behind the decision to leave Poland was her parents' overwhelming fear for the physical safety of her and her brother, rooted not only in the current situation, but also in their own experience of Polish anti-Semitism during the Second World War. Of particular importance was what happened to Joanna's younger sibling who, as she recalls, "had a very Semitic appearance": in March '68 he became the object of persecution by high school teachers, and her mother was paralysed by her fear for him.[32] Even in these circumstances, however, the decision to leave was made – as the narrator herself notes – relatively late, only in August 1969. Joanna, commenting on this fact, offers a clue to what seems to have been a rather universal component of the March experience: in her opinion, at that time her parents were still hoping that they could "figure something out." In other words, they probably believed that they could somehow neutralise this hostile situation and wait it out.[33]

Joanna Rose does not mention this, but in the case of her family – as in the vast majority of decisions made at that time to leave Poland – a colossal significance in the taking of this step can be ascribed to the decision, made by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party on June 1969 (publicised, among others, in "Trybuna Ludu" daily), to abolish, as of 1 September of that year, the previous "facilitations" in the exit procedure "for persons expressing a desire to leave permanently for Israel". From then on, the fear of the future was accompanied by a terrifying vision of finding oneself in a situation from which there would be literally and figuratively no way out, even one as bitter as submitting a plea for permission to leave Poland at the price of renouncing one's Polish citizenship.[34]

Let it be emphasised once again that in this variant of the March '68 experience, which was not primarily associated with emigration but, as Anna Frajlich put it, with exile, it was not only the general, nameless pogrom atmosphere de-

32 On the context of the Holocaust in the experience of March '68, c.f. K. Naszkowska, *Ani tu, ani…*, p. 263.

33 DUZC POLIN, Interview with Joanna Rose conducted by Józef Markiewicz, Warszawa, 12 March 2018. Rafał, in turn, in a conversation with Joanna Wiszniewicz, recalls that his father did not notice/did not want to notice March '68 for a long time and was "awakened" from lethargy by information about the harassment that befell his nephew. Only then, as the narrator emphasizes, did his father "see that Jews were being thrown out" and come to the conclusion that he and his son, then fifteen, should emigrate from Poland; J. Wiszniewicz, *Z Polski…*, pp. 32–33.

34 During the next three months (from June to the end of August 1969), the Passport Office of the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs (MSW) received more passport applications for travel to Israel than in the entire year of 1968, i.e. during the peak of the anti-Semitic attacks; for more information, see D. Stola, *Kraj bez wyjścia…*, pp. 229–230.

scribed by the vast majority of narrators, but also the personal attacks by specific people, until recently colleagues at work or university, that additionally reinforced the sense of injustice and drove the former to leave Poland.[35]

Małka Fisz, who lived in Wrocław at the time, found herself in a particularly difficult situation. Following March '68, her newly married husband was fired from his job and sent to the army for two years. Małka had to maintain herself and their newborn daughter, and at the same time help her seriously ill parents:

> Of course, I had a hard time in sixty-seven. Because of the Six-Day War. I had a sister there, after all, and there was no... there was no news, and the Polish press reported that Israel had been razed to the ground. It wasn't fun. And immediately the anti-Semitic attacks at work began. So, it was... Oh, it was very unpleasant at my work. Sixty-eight and -nine. Very unpleasant [...]. The branch manager was a bigwig in the Party. And he was very anti-Jewish... He really disliked Jews. He really didn't like them. His surname was Schteier. So I suspect he was German. Or, or some other *Volksdeutsch* [*laughter*]. Oh, he was so nasty. He welcomed me to work very pleasantly. At first, he probably didn't know that I was Jewish, but over time, very quickly, he found out. He pestered me a lot. He found mistakes that I didn't make. He accused me of all kinds of things that I had never done. And in the beginning, he took advantage of me a lot. Because he was doing his doctoral thesis, and he needed help with Polish. So, who knew Polish best? Of course, me.[36]

What Małka's experienced in March '68 were primarily a deepening sense of alienation and uncertainty about what the next day would bring. Her parents had decided to leave for Israel in 1969. Although Małka already knew that no favourable future awaited her in Poland, she did not want to leave without her husband, who was still in the army. When he finally returned home, the authorities did not agree to their emigration for several years. Ultimately, they managed to leave Poland only in 1973.

Similarly for Teresa Gerber, who in March '68 was a medical student in Upper Silesia, the decision to leave was obvious in its own way: "[...] I assumed that after the anti-Semitic wave that arose in 1967/1968, if I continued to live in Poland,

I would be a second-class citizen. [...] therefore, my philosophy was: **if I am to be only a second-class citizen here, I can just as well be a** [normal – A.C.] **citizen in another country**."[37]

35 On the topic of the then atmosphere and the sense of fear it evoked, see also K. Naszkowska, *Ani tu, ani...*, pp. 188–191; K. Chylińska, *op. cit.*, pp. 27–28.

36 DUZC POLIN, Interview with Małka Fisz conducted by Kamila Dąbrowska, Copenhagen, 16 Nov. 2016.

37 DUZC POLIN, Interview with Teresa Gerber conducted by Przemysław Kaniecki, Lund, 19 Aug. 2017.

To sum up, to most post-March émigrés the experience of 1968 was primarily an overwhelming feeling of being pushed outside the Polish community and having no prospects for a normal life in Poland. Although formally they had to personally make efforts to leave the country, in fact they had no other choice. One of Mikołaj Grynberg's interlocutors summed up her feelings at that time as follows: "This anti-Semitic attack was unbearable. **We were driven out**. **This decision was taken away from us**. When Gomułka said: 'We are opening the borders to those Polish citizens who believe that Israel is their homeland', shouts of 'Today!' Today!' were heard from the room."[38]

The March experience, type 2: "We were driven out, but we didn't leave"

The paradox contained in the above subtitle is intended to highlight the extremely complex, and in many cases deeply tragic nature of the situation in which some of the victims of March '68 found themselves. Above all, it is an attempt to emphasise the tension, which is strongly present in some of the post-March autobiographical narratives, between the trauma of 1968 and the seemingly "illogical" decision to remain in the violent and hostile realities of the People's Republic of Poland. In this sense, it is, in my opinion, justified to talk about a second type of March '68 experience of the victims of the "anti-Zionist campaign", the dominant feature of which is this potential "biographical inconsistency". When the statistics quoted at the beginning, which show that despite the brutal anti-Semitic witch-hunts of 1967–1968, an equally large group of people did not decide to leave Poland, are taken into account, it soon becomes obvious that a significant number of the victims of the March events could potentially relate to this second variant of the March '68 experience.

The essence of the above is well captured in an interview conducted by Joanna Wiszniewicz with Lena. During the events of March '68 the latter was, like Amalia Reisenthel, a student at one of Wrocław's universities and she closely watched the student protest, of which she clearly felt a part. At the same time, she

38 M. Grynberg, *op. cit.*, p. 77. Sabina Baral described the meaning of the March '68 experience for her family in a similar tone: "In the face of such a massive campaign, propaganda aggression and pressure, **the decision to leave was not a decision at all – there was simply no other option.** And from the moment we applied for permission to leave the country until we crossed the border, nothing could protect us. **We were tried and convicted and finally pleaded guilty – if we asked for permission to go to Israel, we had to be Zionists"**; see S. Baral, *op. cit.*, p. 71. This theme is also strongly present in Teresa Torańska's book. This is the way one of her interlocutors, Anna de Lec, summed up what the March '68 experience meant to her: "Because theoretically, everyone has the right to choose who they want to be. But [only] when they are given this right. In 1968, it turned out that this law did not exist. Because all the so-called Poles who were of Jewish origin but felt Polish were told that no, you are not Poles. And suddenly everything collapsed. And they left with a more aching heart than the Jews who had always known where they belonged because they were Jews"; see T. Torańska, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

was increasingly convinced that the atmosphere around her was becoming more and more hostile. Her intuitions turned out to be correct, and she soon painfully experienced anti-Semitic violence from her peers:

> It completely blew my mind. I didn't know what to do at all, I almost cried. Because it is one thing when a stranger talks to you in that way (for example, an anti-Semitic neighbour) and another thing when you realise that the girl with whom you've been living in the same room [at the students' dormitory – A.C.] for five years suddenly tells you that you're a stranger here. Later, when I calmed down, I thought to myself: "Well, I'm not actually Polish, so why does it affect me so much?" However, it hurt terribly. And a few months had to pass before I came to terms with the fact that to me, [...] Poland did not necessarily have to be my homeland.[39]

As a result, Lena decided to emigrate: "[...] now I thought I should go to Israel. If they don't want Jews here, we have to go where there is a Jewish state [...]";[40] thus she reported her way of thinking at the time. Yet weeks and months passed and she did not apply for a passport, too afraid that she would not find her feet in a new environment. She adopted a wait-and-see tactic, focusing on current challenges, such as completing her studies, and over time she distanced herself – for which she now seems to reproach herself – from her recent traumas: "I didn't even have much Jewish fear! And even the recent March persecutions and harassment I couldn't really relate to myself. Yes, I was shocked, scandalised, terrified by them, but this fear concerned the phenomenon itself, objectively, and not the fact that I myself might feel threatened by this harassment."[41] Over time, the topic of her leaving simply faded away, became irrelevant. Lena started a family and concurrently pursued her professional career. This did not mean, however, that the problem of her Polish–Jewish identity did not haunt her from time to time.

Another variant of a largely similar March experience emerges from Felicja Skala's account, available in the POLIN collections. She is of the same age as Amalia and Lena, and at the time she was studying and participating in student protests in March '68, with the difference that this was in Warsaw. The anti-Semitic purge directly affected her immediate family. Her father lost his job on the government's Science and Technology Committee on charges of "supporting Zionism" and, being a man who had been very close to the ideals of Communism throughout his entire adult life, he felt his situation deeply. He no longer wanted to live in a country that had wronged him and was seriously considering leaving. Felicja's mother,

39 J. Wiszniewicz, *Życie przecięte...*, p. 408.
40 *Ibidem*.
41 *Ibidem*, p. 639.

however, who in March '68 did not experience any unpleasantness at work even though she was also of Jewish descent, did not want to leave. For her, it would be another high-risk journey into the unknown, because she had come to Poland from former Estonia via Siberia, where during the Second World War she had met Felicja's father. Her post-war acclimatisation in Poland had not been without problems, but in the spring of 1968 she was already a liked and respected Russian language teacher at one of Warsaw's schools. Felicja herself was also torn, because in Warsaw she had a boyfriend she cared about very much. However, the problem of leaving Poland was becoming more and more urgent: without her father's salary, it was difficult to balance the already tight household budget. Therefore, it was decided that if Felicja's father did not find a job for three consecutive months, the whole family would apply for permission to leave the country. And then, "to everyone's relief," as Felicja said years later, the editorial office of the niche journal "Przegląd Telekomunikacyjny" employed her father despite his alleged "pro-Zionist attitude." The issue of emigration from Poland became, despite the harm and pressure suffered, irrelevant, and Felicja's family stayed in Warsaw.[42]

In her book, Wiszniewicz offers another example of the experience of the March horror which did not end after leaving Poland with a "travel document". In 1968, Paulina was studying in the second grade of a technical school in Dzierżoniów. Her father was a recognisable figure in the local Jewish community; until 1956, he had worked in the local party apparatus, and March '68 found him employed as the branch manager of one of the Dzierżoniów Regional Industrial Plants. On orders from above, his subordinates carried out a "bottom-up" campaign to get him fired from his job. However, the harassment and persecution of the family did not end there:

> Soon we started receiving threatening phone calls: "It's high time you left for Palestine!". The atmosphere was becoming terrible, [...]. The worst thing in all this was not the propaganda

42 DUZC POLIN, Interview with Felicja Skala conducted by Józef Markiewicz, Warszawa, 20 Oct. 2017. A similar theme of "buying time" is found in the story of Aleksander Włodawer, whose parents did not want to leave Poland despite the deteriorating atmosphere. In this case, however, the situation was the opposite – that is, the narrator's parents agreed that they would leave only if his father lost his job in the near future (his mother felt safe at work). Soon, Włodawer senior received an "offer he could not refuse" from his superiors: three months' salary in exchange for never showing up at work again. As a result, the narrator's parents submitted an application to leave; see Interview with Aleksander Włodawer. The theme of waiting for the situation to improve also appears in Tadeusz Gruber's story about his parents who were fired from work in March '68. Initially, the father was assured that these were only "temporary difficulties," so he had no intention of leaving Poland. He decided to take this step only after a few months, when it become clear that, contrary to previous assurances, no one would want to employ him again; K. Naszkowska, *Wygnani do raju...*, pp. 124–125.

> in the newspapers and on TV, but the unconcealed satisfaction of ordinary people, Poles. Sometimes they even made it clear to us that they were glad that the Jews were being kicked out.[43]

As Paulina continues, almost immediately the entire Dzierżoniów Jewish community decided to leave. The world she knew and felt good in was literally disappearing before her eyes. She also wanted to leave very much, just like her friends, but as a minor she could not apply for permission to leave on her own, whereas her father had no intention of leaving Poland under any circumstances and kept repeating: "We are not going anywhere!".[44] Paulina felt that she was trapped and was increasingly afraid of what the future would bring, but when she could finally make decisions about her own fate, the imperative of escaping from the stuffy, anti-Semitic atmosphere that surrounded her gave way to a sense of responsibility for her parents, by then no longer young and in poor health: "And finally, only us and one other family remained in Dzierżoniów. And apart from us, a few lonely Jews – that's all."[45]

The March experience, type 3: "It was an opportunity"

In the third of the indicated types of March experience, the descriptions of feelings accompanying the phenomena that took place in Poland at that time evince a difference that would be difficult to overlook. It turns out that in some of the interviews analysed, the strictly anti-Semitic and at the same time oppressive aspect of March '68 plays a less dominant role in the narrators' biographies than in the two variants analysed above; at least not large enough to motivate the reason for the decision to leave Poland. Jan Krzysztof Melchior describes his feelings in the context of March '68 as follows:

43 J. Wiszniewicz, *Życie przecięte...*, p. 430.

44 *Ibidem*, p. 430.

45 *Ibidem*, pp. 431, 675–676. The issue of responsibility for one's parents is key to understanding the decision of Mikołaj Grynberg's parents to remain in Poland (despite everything); M. Grynberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 7–8. Janka Kaempfer Louis, in turn, who, like Paulina, in March '68 was still a minor and was dependent on her parents' decisions, did not want to leave Poland at all. It seems that the feeling of not being able to act on one's own behalf, not only for legal reasons, turns out to run across the typology of March experiences proposed here; Janka Kaempfer Louis *op. cit.* In a similar vein, some of Krystyna Naszkowska's interlocutors, including Julia Romanowska or Ryszard Szulkin, recall their emigration as a decision made by their parents; see K. Naszkowska, *Wygnani do raju...*, pp. 66–68, 93. Marcin Starnawski and Marek Szajda also address the problem of agency in the context of the post-March emigration. The latter, who has compared the experiences of participants in the Gomułka *aliyah* and the March *aliyah*, notes that the 1956–1960 *émigrés* felt more lacking in agency; M. Starnawski, *Pokolenie Marca '68...*, pp. 390–393; M. Szajda, *Obraz Polski...*, p. 172.

> [...] my decision to leave [...] was related to my life situation in Poland. I was a third-year student, I was living at my father's house, together with my brother and sister. And I had the prospect, or so it seemed to me then, of living at my father's house for at least another ten years, because I had no chance for a scholarship or any other thing of this kind, so in terms of maintenance, I was fully dependent on my family. And I realised that this situation could continue for about ten years before anything would change. For me, it was a chance to somehow change my conditions, to become a little more independent. [...] Besides, I never thought that this system could change in any way.[46]

Of course, the accounts that can be classified as the third type of March experience do feature examples of anti-Semitic attacks or harassment that directly affected either the narrators themselves or their loved ones; but equally clear is a certain ambivalence in the approach to March '68. From the perspective of Aleksander Włodawer, who graduated from the university in the spring of 1968 and wanted further education in the field of biophysics, which was in its early stages on the Eastern side of the Iron Curtain, the "intensification of anti-Zionist sentiment" at the time helped him – as he somewhat self-ironically puts it –realise his life's ambitions. Long before the events of 1967–1968 it had been clear to him that after completing his master's degree he should move to the West, at least for some time. As he explains: "Of course, I didn't plan to leave permanently, but [I knew] that I wanted to go to the United States for my doctoral studies and I worked towards that goal very honestly."[47]

An additional distinguishing feature of this type of March experience is the desire to capture the broader background of the events. It could be argued that in

46 DUZC POLIN, Interview with Jan Krzysztof Melchior conducted by Józef Mackiewicz, Ulricehamn, 18 Aug. 2017.

47 Interview with Aleksander Włodawer. The issue of strong ambivalence in relation to the problem of emigration from Poland at that time is clearly visible in, among others, Michał Sobelman's story: "It was a tragedy for me. Today, leaving the country where I live might be a drama for me, but not a tragedy. But then it was a tragedy because I was about to leave the only place I knew. I was in love with some girl; I had friends. I wanted to leave to see the world, but not permanently. I understood that it was an opportunity to see a part of the world. After all, I had seen American films and read colourful magazines, and that attracted me. So, two conflicting feelings were fighting within me. On the one hand, terror and grief, because they are driving one out of this small apartment, one and a half rooms in fact, a room with a kitchen and a hall, but this is the only place one knows, the only home. On the other hand, curiosity about the world and adventure. I knew I would not come back"; K. Naszkowska, *Ani tu, ani...*, p. 262. In his analyses of interviews with post-March émigrés, Marcin Starnawski also draws attention to the problem of ambivalence between the vision of a great adventure and the feeling of being pushed out of Poland among some (then very young) members of this group; *idem*, *Pokolenie Marca '68...*, pp. 392–393.

this way of remembering March '68, the intellectual approach prevails over the emotions, at least in some measure. In my opinion, the essence of the problem was captured by Jan Groński:

> [...] I was very well aware that it was..., that it had something to do with, let's say, a wave of anti-Semitism or fighting within the Communist party. Besides, Moczar and so on,[48] all this was well known to me. Well, I was old enough to know what it was about. I can't say I was depressed or anything. For me, it was a great adventure. This is what was happening then. Which maybe feels stupid now. Now you look back on it over the years; but then I didn't really feel like I had been defeated, so to speak. You know, of course it was unfair and so on and so forth, but for a young person these are different choices in life and that is interesting in a sense [...] but I was..., for me back then, it was a political fight within the Communist Party. That's how I looked at it back then. This means the Moczar wing and, let's say, the Gomułka wing [...]. And the fact that..., all those anti-Jewish articles appeared in the press, and my mother was fired from her job. Of course, you couldn't be unaware that these were political matters. Of course, it actually started before March, right. [...] For me it was quite clear that Moczar and his group were trying to play on these feelings among certain Polish groups; that it was simply a method to gain power. They simply incited everyone they could – of course, not everyone allowed themselves to be incited – in order to gain power. The fact that anti-Semitism existed in Poland – that is, even before March – was also clear to me.[49]

48 The narrator refers to one of the three dimensions of March '68 mentioned earlier. Here, the power struggle within the Communist party elite is emphasized. Seeing the anti-Semitic campaign of March '68 from this perspective is primarily a political tool used by Mieczysław Moczar, the all-powerful Minister of Internal Affairs and leader of an informal "partisan group", in order to take over the reins of the state from Mieczysław Gomułka.

49 DUZC POLIN, Interview with Jan Groński conducted by Józef Markiewicz, Warszawa, 12 Aug. 2017. Similar themes can also be found in the already mentioned account by B. Dąbrowska; *Krajobraz po szoku...*, pp. 68–69. Let it be noted, however, that while in Groński's case a certain distance from anti-Semitic violence does not eliminate the feeling that one should leave Poland after all, Dąbrowska, driven not only by a cold assessment of the political mechanisms of March '68, ultimately stays in Poland and comments on her fate: "I couldn't leave with them. They went to different parts of the world, so it wouldn't have been possible to be close to everyone anyway. I also didn't want to leave because of my childhood experiences with living in a foreign environment. I think that's where my visions of the fate of an emigrant came from, unrealistic but influencing my decision--making. One of those is that here I have my chair, my table, and my room, but when I leave them, everything would be foreign and I would not be able to find my way around. I also imagined myself sweeping floors and washing dishes in a bar – because I wouldn't have been able to support myself otherwise; with my humanistic profession, this [i.e. Poland – A.C.] is the only place where I am a good specialist. Here, in this language, which was an extremely important argument for staying in Poland"; *Krajobraz po szoku...*, p. 70.

Interviewees representing this variant of the March experience are also more likely to present a more nuanced picture of the attitudes of those around them. This is how the already quoted Aleksander Włodawer, who in his narrative attached great importance to details, and often even paradoxes, recalled his parents' situation at the height of the "anti-Zionist campaign" in Poland:

> [...] there were also some very strange things in these March attitudes. [...] the entire scientific community in which my parents were involved was extremely supportive and helpful. We also felt that all these strange things that were said on television were not accepted by those who knew us. On the contrary, they tried their best to support us mentally.[50]

In its extreme form, the "commonsensical"/"analytical" form of the March experience takes on features which representatives of the first two types of experience, the central motif of which is the trauma associated with the feeling of being brutally thrown out of Polish society, might find difficult to accept. In a conversation with Krystyna Naszkowska, Krzysztof Zorde describes his state of mind at that time:

> I wanted to start a new life; different, more interesting, with greater prospects. I don't intend to pretend to have been an oppositionist or a freedom fighter – I wasn't. I am an opportunist in life. I wasn't interested in politics. I used my origins to leave because, after March 1968, such an opportunity arose. For me, leaving Poland was not a traumatic experience. On the contrary: it was a great adventure.[51]

And in response to Naszkowska's question about how he perceived Poland then, he adds:

> [As] a country where only conformists made a career. If you wanted to achieve something, you had to adopt this existential principle. My friends graduated from college and went into hopeless, boring jobs. I was fed up with my life at that time, with domestic quarrels between

50 Interview with Aleksander Włodawer.

51 K. Naszkowska, *Ani tu, ani...*, p. 222. It should be clearly noted here that Naszkowska's work, read as a whole, has a completely different tone, and in terms of personal experience in March '68, the quoted conversation with Krzysztof Zorde clearly differs from the other interviews included in this volume; see, for example, the account of Raisa Sadowska, who recalls acts of anti-Semitic verbal violence against her sister and friend; *ibidem*, pp. 187–190. Also, the conversations of post-March émigrés included in Naszkowska' earlier book are – as its title suggests – a testimony to the largely traumatic dimensions of March '68 and the experience of being made to leave Poland; K. Naszkowska, *Wygnani do raju...*, pp. 12–13, 191–192.

> my parents, with everything that seemed grey and uninteresting to me. When I announced at home that I was leaving, my mother said: "I will be fired from my job." And they actually did kick her out. I immediately told her not to worry because I would send her money.[52]

The March experience, type 4: Solidarity before "Solidarity"

The *leitmotif* of the last type of March experience is the sense of support coming, virtually in spite of everyone and everything, from members of the Polish society. From this perspective, no one denies that in Poland at that time there was a brutal, anti-Semitic campaign and purges that harmed thousands of people, but in the autobiographical dimension, March '68 was a positive experience. It turns out that it was not necessarily only the immediate surroundings of this group of March narrators who rose to the challenge in this hour of trial. A good illustration of this phenomenon is provided by a passage from the narrative of Perła Kacman, who in 1968 was studying at the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of the University of Warsaw and who defines her March *Erfahrung* as follows:

> This was not an outbreak of anti-Semitism; it was exactly the opposite. I got hit in the head with a stone [by Polish anti-Semite because of being a Jewess – A.C.] when I was a little girl but in 1968, many groups sympathized with Jews. They were people like me. They did not love Communism; they did not love the authorities [...]. At that time, I encountered many signs of solidarity from the part of society with which I identified.[53]

Joanna Wiszniewicz's interlocutor, Zosia, who was also studying at the University of Warsaw at that time, describes her March experience in a similar vein. In her narrative, the overwhelming sense of community that emerges from the student rebellion drowns out, at least to some extent, the hostile, anti-Semitic noise coming from the outside world. This sense of togetherness would largely determine Zosia's future, resulting, among others, in her strong links with the democratic opposition to the Communist regime, which later led to the emergence of "Solidarity" and eventually brought about the peaceful transition of power in Poland in 1989. Back in 1968, Zosia had vigorously participated in the independent student movement:

> I saw anti-Semitic attacks, of course, but it seemed to me just a political game, a staged situation that no one believed in. It did not affect me personally – my experience in Warsaw was the enthusiasm of collective protest and the extraordinary solidarity of the university

52 *Ibidem*.
53 M. Grynberg, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

students. I had a feeling that everyone around me shared the same views, that all normal people had the same views as me. I surrendered myself to this atmosphere; I went, of course, like other students, to the rally on 8th March; three days later, at a large meeting in the Auditorium Maximum, I even spoke out myself [...].[54] Therefore, seeing that so many people were emigrating, I thought that they had taken their decision too hastily. That this campaign would soon end, and we just needed to wait it out.[55]

Maria – a few years older than Perła and Zosia, which is why she was at a different stage of life at that time – similarly emphasises the key role of the support she received in the period 1967–1968 directly from, among others, her closest friends and colleagues, as well as indirectly from anonymous Kraków taxi drivers. Here, too, the sense of solidarity turns out to be the most important component of the narrator's March experiences:

I wonder if I can even comment on those times. I was very lucky that March because I was not disappointed by Polish intellectuals who were able to distance themselves from certain events and see them in a broader context. [...] I was not living wrapped up in cotton wool at that time. I knew well what the press were writing, what was being said on the radio, what Gomułka was saying on TV, what mass rallies were being organized, and how much various people were being harmed. It hurt me, and I don't deny it. But I wasn't afraid. Perhaps because the people I had lived among for over twenty years, my psychiatric and artistic community, thought and felt similarly to me. I'm not lying when I say that such an environment existed, but I probably shouldn't comment on March 1968, because my attitude to those events was – I would say immodestly – very intellectual. I looked at what was happening then as one of the political games in which Jews have always been involved.[56]

54 Zosia refers to the key moments of the student protest at Warsaw University in March '68, which sparked a nationwide youth rebellion in Poland.

55 J. Wiszniewicz, *Życie przecięte...*, pp. 394–395.

56 M. Orwid, *op. cit.*, pp. 180–182. In turn, Julian Aleksandrowicz, almost two generations older, a member of the Polish resistance during the Second World War and a professor at the Academy of Medicine in Kraków in the late sixties, recalled the events of March '68 as follows: "Several sarcastic comments against me were published in "Życie Literackie" [...] suggesting that I should be thrown out of Poland. I didn't read them, but everyone around me was very moved. Apparently, no one had the courage to show me that text. I remember that I was very busy that day. Suddenly, the door opened and my closest collaborator, Julian Blicharski, literally rushed through it, followed by a crowd of comrades-in-arms. Maybe thirty guys came. I asked, 'Are we having a ZBoWiD [i.e. Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy, a Communist-organised association for war veterans – A.C.] congress?' and they said, "You don't know? We came to defend you.' They brought a letter to the authorities with the signatures of many people", recounts Mr Aleksandrowicz, and then adds: "For me, the most important thing was the sole fact of such a spontaneous manifestation of friendship on the part of my friends"; J. Aleksandrowicz, E. Stawowy, *op. cit.*,

What unites all the above accounts of the March experience is the strong belief that March '68 was indeed a brutal attempt to expel the Jews from the national community, but that thanks to the decent attitude of the immediate Polish surroundings, this attempt was, at least on a personal level, completely unsuccessful. In this case, the specific denial of the anti-Semitic dimension of March '68 is demonstrated also by the fact that narrators of all the above accounts deliberately remained in Poland. It seems that this version of the March experience is probably the most rarely articulated, both in the available sources and in the existing analyses of the complex of phenomena commonly referred to as March '68.

Conclusion: *Erfahrung* means journey

In conclusion, I would like to return to Martin Jay's concept presented in his work on the affinity between experience and memory. There is no doubt that looking at the problem of the various dimensions of the March experience through the prism of broadly understood memory studies makes it possible to introduce – at least partially – some elementary order into this blurry picture. Still, the sole aim of the current text was to sketch certain general directions of analysis and embed them in specific empirical material. The typology I propose does not assume a strict division between its individual components, because the boundaries between different variants of the March experience are fluid. The anti-Semitic March '68 and its autobiographical experience were processes extended in time and resulting from many overlapping phenomena, stimuli and points of view. The following version of the March experience, for example, recounted by Bronka Karst, defies any attempt to be precisely classified, a fact of which the narrator herself is fully aware. In her account, "solidarity" and "analysis" were two complementary perspectives that formed the first impression of March '68. At the time, Bronka knew that the anti-Semitic campaign had started in the state-controlled press, and she was also aware that the atmosphere around Polish Jews was getting tenser and bringing a grim harvest of harassment and the dismissal of an increasing number of persons from work. However, her perceptions and feelings were completely different:

> [...] then, in the environment of the University of Warsaw, being Jewish was something positive. As if you belonged to some aristocracy, a higher class. That's right! Because we – people of Jewish origin – were picked out from the background and accused of manipulating students, of the worst crimes. And since this accusation was made by the so-called government,

p. 246. The theme of support provided during the "anti-Zionist campaign" by close and distant friends, combined with self-reflection on "the ability to grasp the entire phenomenon in its various arrangements", become the core of the March experience in the story of another resident of Kraków at that time who had to face the atmosphere of the anti-Semitic witch-hunt and night calls "suggesting" he go to Israel as soon as possible; see H. Vogler, *Autoportret z pamięci. Cz. 3: Dojrzałość*, Kraków 1981, pp. 284–286.

> the reaction of people at the university was completely opposite. [...] We provoked the need to show solidarity and support – some even envied me for being Jewish![57]

Due to her involvement in student protests at the University of Warsaw, Bronka was imprisoned for several months and expelled from the university. She experienced the brutal face of the totalitarian system firsthand, but it did not change her perspective or attitude. Ultimately, she left Poland only because her father, with whom she felt a strong bond, decided to leave. The narrator herself further notes that her March experience underwent serious re-evaluation over time. The key factor in this process turns out to be leaving Poland and contact with other post-March émigrés:

> I met a lot of people with a huge sense of injustice. I met a man who was a film director, he handn't known he was Jewish, and someone at work, imagine, one day told him: "You bastard, Jew!" and spat in his face. And he just packed up. And I met people from small towns, Jewish families, elderly people who had lived in a Polish environment for so many years, neighbours amongst neighbours, who were told out of the blue that they had nothing to do in Poland. And suddenly they all found themselves in Vienna,[58] completely lost, and they had no idea where they were going or why it had ended this way. And what did I feel? If you spend a few months in Vienna in such a group and you leave Poland on these Jewish papers [i.e. the "travel documents" – A.C.], you finally start to develop an attitude towards this issue. And some identity. Because Jewish papers define a person very much! You leave Poland for this reason and no other, and you feel thrown out. Just like I was kicked out of the university and caught off guard and didn't know what to do next (like others in Vienna).[59]

From that moment on, the issue of support received from the immediate environment and the distant analysis of the political background of the March

57 J. Wiszniewicz, *Życie przecięte...*, pp. 329–330.

58 Vienna was the first stop on the journey to a new life for the vast majority of post-March émigrés. In most cases, it was only there that they had to decide which country to choose as their final destination.

59 *Ibidem*, p. 519. The issue of the conventional nature of the typology proposed here is well illustrated by an attempt to apply it to the autobiographical account of Henryk Dasko, which contains elements of both the "analytical" and the "solidarity" experience and at the same time a strong feeling of being forced out of Poland. This does not change the fact that when Dasko evaluates those events from the perspective of many years, he clearly emphasizes that "individual feelings, reactions, and finally the decisions of those days were different – no one has the right to judge the choices made at that time or later. But the statement that no Jews were expelled from Poland is extremely untrue: the authorities at that time wanted to get rid of all Jews, both those who felt they had a Jewish identity and those who were completely assimilated. March was a crackdown on revisionists, an intra-party game, and a generational change in staff. But above all, in its most unique dimension, March was an unquestionable attempt to expel all Jews from Poland"; see *idem*, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

events, which in Bronka's subjective opinion had formed the foundation of her experience of March '68, fade into the background. The key to understanding the latter is the equally authentic belief that she, too, had been a victim of anti-Semitic harassment. Just as she felt supported by her Polish environment then, now she has a strong feeling that she had been driven out from Poland.

Bronka Karst's case not only reveals the fluidity of different types of March experiences, but also points to their temporal nature. The latter is, as must be recalled, of great importance to Jay Martin's understanding of experience as a kind of collective process stretched over time. It is worth noting that the victims of March '68 often draw attention to this issue themselves; one of them is the previously mentioned Jan Groński, who clearly and somewhat self-ironically states that the feeling that accompanied his emigration from Poland was primarily a sense of great adventure, which, as he assumed, was waiting for him in the West. Similar meta-messages from narrators can be found in the stories of, for example, Anna de Lec or Teresa Polin.[60] It seems that in researching the problem of March '68 experiences, it must always be borne in mind that the time context in which a given account was narrated is of enormous importance. The fact that should never be overlooked is that the vast majority of such materials were created long after the fateful year.[61] The default catalogue of potential limitations in research focused on March experiences should also include other elements that clearly indicate that despite the scholars' best intentions, research to date still amounts to only scratching the surface of the problem. Out of necessity, I will focus here only on two of these limitations.

The first limitation did appear in the analysis proposed above, but only indirectly, and thus it was not fully articulated. When currently examining the experience of the victims of March '68, we rely primarily on the accounts of those born soon after the Second World War (the so-called baby-boomers), only rarely supplemented with the perspective of the preceding generation. Of course, the voice of the latter is heard when those who witnessed the year 1968 as youngsters recount the opinions and decisions of their parents, but this is still just an echo.[62]

60 T. Torańska, *op. cit.*, p. 98; M. Grynberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 352–353.

61 The problem of the changing approach to understanding the meaning of the March '68 experience in the group of post-March émigrés over time is also noted by Marek Szajda, *Obraz Polski...*, p. 172; *idem*, *Żydowska pamięć...*, pp. 49–50.

62 This problem is illustrated in its essential form by, among others, Agata Tuszyńska, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–175. Some idea about the potential differences in the perspective of "adult" and "young" post-March émigrés is provided by the results of a survey conducted among this group by the editors of the Paris-based "Kultura". Among the magazine's respondents (130 in total) at that time, over 2/3 were people who were thirty or older when they left Poland; K. Chylińska, *op. cit.*, pp. 20–21. Another piece of comparative material are the interviews, researched by Marek Szajda, which Sabina Levin conducted in the latter half of the 1970s among post-March émigrés permanently settled in Israel; M. Szajda, *"Out of Poland...*, pp. 108–112.

Secondly, when analysing the available accounts of the victims of March '68, it is difficult to avoid the impression that their narrators are primarily men and women who have turned their mostly traumatic experiences into something positive. In most cases, these accounts are, all things considered, success stories of those, despite all the harm done to them, have found their way in the post-March reality thanks to great sacrifice and ambition, and on the basis of hard work. In other words, it is mostly the voice of those victims of March '68 who over time have started families, in highly competitive fields, are spiritually rich and materially affluent, and feel fulfilled despite the entanglements of their Polish-Jewish identity. They eventually regained agency, even if they initially lost control of their lives. It must therefore be assumed that relevant scholarship is likely to overlook those who were unable to cope with the stigmatisation and exclusion they had experienced during March '68 and who do not want to talk about it. The question then is to what extent the experiences of the latter group fit into the typology proposed here.[63]

Finally, let us return to Jay, who highlights the importance of the experience of individuals in building group identity and articulating elements of biographical memory that were previously suppressed and therefore inaccessible to a wider audience. Undoubtedly, the memory of the March trauma and the feelings of grief that accompanied many victims of the "anti-Zionist campaign" were for many years completely absent from Polish cultural memory, to the latter's great loss. However, this does not mean, in my opinion, that the issue of the March '68 experience can be reduced to this perspective alone, since, as I have tried to show, other possible points of view are just as little heard. There may, of course, be tensions between certain types of March *Erfahrung*, for example between those who were expelled and those who emphasise a sense of solidarity. In addition, the myth of Polish innocence certainly plays a crucial role in Polish public debate, and therefore the experience of March exile is not and will not be welcome. Nevertheless, one of the foundations of oral history was, and still is, the thoroughly democratic and emancipatory postulate of giving a voice to those who have not been able to express their experiences. This is unquestionably not an easy task in a situation where recent history, and especially Polish-Jewish relations, are under strong political pressure; but this should not prevent us from going beyond these circumstances.

63 The phenomenon mentioned here is particularly visible in the works by A. Tuszyńska, *op. cit.*, and K. Naszkowska, *Ani tu, ani tam…*; *eadem*, *Wygnani do raju…*, but also in the published memoirs of Henryk Dasko or Adam Ringer.

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Summary
March ’68 is one of the most complex events in recent Polish history. It was at once a student revolt, a power struggle within the government apparatus, and a brutal anti-Semitic witch-hunt that forced more than 13,000 Polish citizens of Jewish origin to leave the country. The author focuses on the latter, seeking to answer the question of how the victims of the “anti-Zionist campaign” experienced the events of the time.