



GET THE TROLLS

State-funded Polish media outlets promotes a vile antisemitic book as “factual”

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The state-funded Polish media outlet, Media Narodowe, has promoted a vile antisemitic book presenting it as a publication that “contains scientific facts about the Jewish psyche.” The book, titled “Meet the Jew” and written in 1912 by Teodor Jeske-Choinski, was recently republished by the small publishing house Magna Polonia. It pictures antisemitic caricatures on its cover and calls Jews “a parasitic tribe”.



Media Narodowe promują antysemitkę książkę? Bzdura! Wyjaśniamy

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In the video on Media Narodowe’s YouTube channel, Przemysław Holocher, a representative of the publishing house Magna Polonia and a former leader of the extreme-right organization, National-Radical Camp, claimed that the book contains deep psychological characteristics of the Jew. The book lists attributes such as xenophobia, hatred towards other religions and a sense of superiority and ungratefulness as the main features of the Jewish community.

Holocher went as far as to say that anti-Jewish pogroms and antipathy towards Jews in Europe were ultimately caused by “conspiring Jews.” He then continued saying the facts in the book – and not the book in itself – are a problem, and that the most aggressive antisemitic movements would stop if Jews would change and root

out their deep racism against Christians and other people.

Nodding in approval, the Media Narodowe interviewer said that book could provide “a deeper cultural understanding of Jews – their Talmudism and tribalism.”

Media Narodowe is a radical nationalist media outlet consisting of a webpage and a YouTube channel. It receives state funds from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and is part of the Independence March Association, a far-right group that organises the main annual march on Polish Independence Day. Media Narodowe often features openly antisemitic, Islamophobic and xenophobic opinion columns and articles, and many of their contributors propagate far-right conspiracy narratives such as the New World Order or the Great Reset, gaining traction in extreme environments in other countries. Most recently they featured a publicist spreading disinformation related to the war in Ukraine, including fake news about American bioweapon labs in Ukrainian territory or the conspiracy theory that Ukraine is being depopulated in order to be settled by Jews.

The new edition of “Meet the Jew”, promoted by Media Narodowe, displays antisemitism on its cover page, which depicts 16 variants of the “Happy Merchant” – an antisemitic drawing of a Jewish man with heavily stereotyped facial features who is greedily rubbing his hands together – each wearing different clothes and symbols, such as the LGBTQ flag, the communist sickle and hammer or a TV journalist’s microphone.

The “Happy Merchant” drawing is described by ADL as “the most popular antisemitic meme among white supremacists.” And yet, the Magna Polonia representative, Przemyslaw Holocher, described the book cover as “playful” and “designed to attract the reader”, heavily downplaying its antisemitic connotation.

Who was Teodor Jeske-Choinski, author of the antisemitic book “Meet the Jew”?

Teodor Jeske-Choinski (Pleszew 1854 – Warsaw 1920) was a Polish intellectual and writer who was involved in the Positivism movement in his youth, later becoming a staunch conservative and nationalist. Jeske-Choinski wrote historical novels, which were praised for their thorough research, as well as critiques of progressive movements. Some of his writing centred on vilifying the Jewish community. “Meet the Jew”, first published in 1912, is described by scholar [Joanna Beata Michlic](#) as “containing the most elaborate single contemporary representation of the belief in the Jew as national Polish enemy.” The book displays the author’s personal antipathy towards Jews, paired with an attempt to back up his aversion through a selective inclusion of historical events and pseudohistorical theories of the time, twisted to his need. On another book, ‘Legend about the ritual murder’, Jeske-Choinski propagated conspiracy narratives on the [blood libel](#) - a centuries-old false allegation that Jews murder Christians (especially children) to use their blood for ritual purposes. His high social status gave credibility to his antisemitic positions, propagated as national ‘self-defense, but today he is considered one of the main antisemitic theorists in the country.

Furthermore, Holocher presented Teodor Jeske-Choinski, the author of the book, as “repeatedly persecuted by Polish governments for presenting an authentic study of ‘The Talmudic Jew.’” This is false and depicts Jeske-Choinski as a victim rather than an antisemite advocating hostility to Jews.

After seeing the book promotion on Media Narodowe, ‘Never Again’ Association, Get the Trolls Out! implementing partner in Poland, alerted the country’s mainstream media. Among them, the daily Rzeczpospolita wrote an article about this case, which was then followed by reports by several other media outlets, generating a backlash against Media Narodowe.

What is problematic, said Anna Tatar from ‘Never Again’ Association in her interview to Rzeczpospolita, is that the book was published without any critical commentary that would inform about the context in which it was written. Even worse, Tatar added, the book was promoted on Media Narodowe as a factual account of the “Jewish psyche”, therefore spreading and amplifying dangerous antisemitic narratives as truthful.

In response, Media Narodowe published an article attacking the accusations as “ridiculous” and defending their promotion of the book. In this response, the far-right media outlet stated that the book was written by a renowned Polish author and, once again, stated that it contains ‘dry facts.’

Today, books by Jeske-Choinski are used as a historical source to research and document the history of antisemitism in Poland. They are also available on online libraries under public domain, and ‘Meet the Jew’ is on the list of “Not recommended to distribute online” published by ‘Never Again’ Association, as a book that should never be published without a critical commentary.

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