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Scientific Belts as a Factor of National Integration on Poland's Leaders at the time of the 19th and 20th centuries

Key words: partitions, scientific societies, scientific conventions, disintegration and integration, struggle for independence

“Careworn, we shall not put down the weapon
But we will serve under new, different banners;
Today the hardened steel yields to the power of spirit
These days the old world will be revived by science...”¹

In the excerpt from his poem written over three hundred years ago Władysław Anczyc (1823-1883), a poet and playwright living in the Austrian Partition, emphasises the significance of contacts between Polish scientific communities in the second half of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century, which were supposed to maintain identity and tighten national bonds over the border posts. For Poles, deprived of their own state, making unsuccessful attempts at regaining independence, “the power of spirit” was to replace the armed struggle. It did not, in any sense, mean that the dreams about political freedom were abandoned, but that the struggle was moved into another dimension. It was science that became the foundation for the rebirth of ‘the old world’ and the victory over the military power.

In the present article we tackle the issue of contacts between scientific communities as an important factor in the national integration. We intend to illustrate, providing selected examples, the process that led Polish scholars to pursue activities which were supposed to replace the armed struggle they had carried on until that time, activities which were aimed at the integration of the communities living in the three different areas of the partitioned Poland. In the second half of the 19th century many of those who were first to take the integration initiative considered these activities to be

* The results of the research carried out under the research theme No. 271/11/S were financed from the science grant granted by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education; The Institute of History and International Relations. Faculty of Humanities; jaroslaw.cabaj@uph.edu.pl, ORCID iD 0000-0002-8697-5516.

¹ An excerpt from a commemorative poem written by Władysława Anczyc and read at the informal meeting of the participants of the 3rd Convention of Polish Doctors and Naturalists in Cracow in 1881. *Dwa zjazdy. Zjazd Przyrodników i Lekarzy Polskich. Dzień 1-szy*, „Czas” no. 166 from 23 July 1881, p. 2; cf. also CABAJ 2007: 364-365.

the struggle for 'the cause of Motherland'. They were important at that time because they helped to maintain the unity of the nation which lived, excluding the emigration, in three different state organizations (Russia, Austria-Hungary, Prussia-Germany). The next generation that was engaged in integration activities laid the foundation for the independent Poland during the First World War and a few years after its end.

The activities Polish scientific and professional communities pursued were important contributory factors in the maintenance of identity and unity of the stateless nation. That was because of the disintegration process that kept going in the Polish lands triggered by the modernization processes observed all over the world, the partitioning superpowers including, and also because of the development of the capitalist economy. Economic reasons were put forward (by Róża Luksemburg, among others) to give legitimacy to the diagnoses that questioned the sense of pursuing activities aimed at regaining independence and integrating into one organism the territories of the former Republic of Poland. The disintegration affected also the cultural and mental sphere, which was seen in the development of specific features of character of Poles living in different partitions, e.g. efficient administration attributed to Prussian subjects², thriftiness to Austrian subjects, and the eagerness to conspire – Russian³. Gradually, as, among others, Henryk Wereszecki observed, Poles were beginning to identify with the partitioning powers. He pointed out that around 1830 the peasant masses in Galicia considered themselves to be part of the Austrian State. Galician peasants believed that the participants of the November Uprising, fighting in the Kingdom of Poland, "joined Poles" and "went to Poland" to fight with Moscow. That led to the conclusion that Poland belonged to Moscow, and Galician peasants to the Austrian emperor⁴.

The disintegration processes developed also in the scientific communities. In view of the progress marching on in many different fields the lack of possibilities for taking up studies in the Polish language was an acute problem. It is good to remember that after 1831 the universities in Vilnius and in Warsaw were shut down, and the Main School with Polish as the language of instruction existed in the Russian Partition only for seven years (1862-1869). At the end of the 1840s, after the Republic of Cracow ceased to exist, the Austrian authorities germanised the university in Cracow. It was twenty years later, when Austria-Hungary was being reformed, that the universities in Cracow and Lviv were repolonized. After these changes studying in the Polish language from the elementary to the higher level was possible only in the Austrian Partition. In the other two education served denationalization. This continued from the end of the 1960s to the outbreak of the First World War, with some concessions to Poles made by the Russian partitioner after the events of 1905.

The time span embraced in the present article is the last half-century of slavery. Its beginning is the fall of the January Uprising, its end – the outbreak of the Great War, which opened up the possibility for rebuilding the independent Polish State. It is important that in the above-mentioned half-century of slavery the unity of the nation divided by the partitions' borders was maintained. It was the time when –

² TRZECIAKOWSKI 1977: 117-127; JAWORSKI 1998.

³ KIENIEWICZ 1977: 105-115.

⁴ WERESZYCKI 1977: 87-101.

as Tadeusz Łepkowski remarked many years ago – the question of “unity, character, power, culture-making and state-building abilities, psychosocial health of the Polish nation”⁵ was to be decided.

It is also the 100-year anniversary of Polish independence celebrated this year that is the reason why we tackle the issue of scientific contacts that were to integrate the stateless nation. In this context the question of maintaining scientific bonds on the all-Polish scale is important as it was followed by different forms of political cooperation. Additionally, this issue has not been fully investigated by historians. Selected aspects of scientific connections were analysed in the publications by, among others, Julian Dybiec⁶, Jan Hulewicz⁷, Jerzy Rózewicz⁸ and Jarosław Cabaj⁹. The contacts between Polish and Czech doctors were examined by Soňa Štrbáňová¹⁰.

I treat the contacts of Polish scientific circles as part of conventions as an element of modernization processes in Poland. Tadeusz Łepkowski¹¹ took up this issue in his publication. On the other hand, I omit the aspects of political and armed struggle along with their determinants. These are the subject of separate publications¹². Organizers of scientific contacts distanced themselves from any political activity, fearing that it would harm the organization of meetings.

The collective actions taken by Polish scientific communities from the three partitions manifested themselves, first of all, in the organisation of scientific conferences and the existence of societies. Scientific societies were the first to launch initiatives to cooperate over the border posts. They attracted compatriots from all the three partitions. But it was only within the framework of all-Polish conventions that the co-operation grew on a grand scale, and, in time, developed organized forms.

When discussing the issue of scientific conventions organised at that time it is worth mentioning their initiators who were active participants of the armed bids for independence. The originators of doctors' meetings were Adrian Baraniecki (1828-1891) and Polikarp Girsztowt (1827-1877). The former one, a doctor, worked in Kamieniec Podolski, where in 1859, together with Józef Rolle and K. Przyborowski, established the Society of Doctors of the Podole Region. During the January Uprising he was forced to leave his local homeland as he ran the risk of being arrested for his involvement in the independence activities. Since 1868 he settled in Cracow, where he managed to organise periodic conventions of Polish doctors and naturalists¹³. What made A. Baraniecki put forward the proposal to organize periodic meetings embracing the three partitions? The main reason was surely the need for establishing contacts, and as the direct factor he quoted the necessity to normalize the native medical terminology. In the booklet published in 1861 he explained it in the following way: “As we are spread almost all over the globe, forced to earn a living among

⁵ ŁEPKOWSKI 1987: 67; CABAJ 2007: 5.

⁶ DYBIEC 1983; DYBIEC 1993; DYBIEC 2004.

⁷ HULEWICZ 1958; HULEWICZ 1934.

⁸ RÓZIEWICZ 1984.

⁹ CABAJ 2007; CABAJ 2017.

¹⁰ ŠTRBÁŇOVÁ 1990.

¹¹ ŁEPKOWSKI 2003.

¹² MARZEC 2016; WANDYCZ 1995.

¹³ KONOPKA 1966: 17 BOJARSKA 1935: 270-271.

strangers, or study in a foreign language; graduates of Russian, German, French and other universities, and only in part of the Cracow university and the once existing universities of Vilnius and Warsaw, it is not surprising that using different terminologies, influenced by ideas from different schools, we cannot communicate easily¹⁴.

Thus, the necessity of organising meetings of Polish doctors from the three partitions was stressed by A. Baraniecki. While the need to establish societies and maintain systematic relations between them was emphasised by his contemporary Polikarp Girsztowt, the professor of surgery, first at the Medical-Surgical Academy of Warsaw, and then at the Main School, who organized the insurrectional medical corps¹⁵ at the time of the armed bid for independence that happened between 1863-1864.

When the above-mentioned A. Baraniecki and P. Girsztowt advocated collective actions, neither well-developed structures nor possibilities to act over the border posts existed yet. The project to organise periodic scientific meetings that A. Baraniecki put forward was accepted and implemented. The 1st Convention of Polish Doctors and Naturalists organized by the leaders of the Cracow Scientific Association was held in Cracow in 1869. Other scientific and professional groups followed this example. Except for doctors and naturalists, meetings were organised by technicians, lawyers, economists, historians, literary scholars, miners and steelworkers, et al. Altogether, until 1914 over sixty conventions were held, which were all-Polish as regards the list of participants and the subjects that were raised there. Additionally, the participants of the meetings adhered to the rule that all Polish lands should be represented in their presidiums.

The organizers of most of the conventions were the two university centres in Galicia – Cracow and Lviv, while the centre in Warsaw only three times and that in Poznań twice. The small number of meetings in the Prussian and Russian Partitions was the result of the policy towards Poles carried out by the authorities. A good example is the 8th Convention of Polish Doctors and Naturalists, which was supposed to be held in Poznań in 1898 but was finally cancelled because of the administrative-legal barriers the Prussian authorities built for the organisers¹⁶.

The organizers of conventions were scientific and professional societies and associations functioning at that time. The preparation and making of these events was an important form of communication between the members. These meetings – as it was already mentioned above – gave more opportunities to meet and establish relations than the official ones held between the societies. Additionally, such conventions attracted several participants to the same town. For this reason, they were important social and cultural events. Special parties and balls were organized, and trip routes planned for the participants. A special programme was prepared by the theatres in Cracow and Lviv dedicated to the guests from behind the border posts. Conventions were used as occasions for writing tourist guides. Thanks to these initiatives, Cracow and Lviv, which invited participants of conventions most often, were enriched with new publications on the monuments in the cities.

¹⁴ BARANIECKI 1861: 7- 8.

¹⁵ TURKOWSKI 1959-1960: 1-3.

¹⁶ MASTYŃSKA 1934.

It is worth mentioning that in the second half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, in the Austrian Partition, besides some political freedom, there was an organizational base for all-Polish meetings in the form of societies and scientific facilities. It is impossible to mention them all here. An important role in establishing and maintaining relations among the three partitions was played by the already-mentioned Cracow Scientific Society, transformed in 1827 into the Academy of Learning¹⁷. While in the metropolitan Lviv, since 1827, there functioned the National Ossoliński Institute, funded ten years earlier by Józef Maksymilain Ossoliński. In the Prussian Partition scientific initiatives on the regional scale, as well as those embracing the three partitions, were taken by, established in 1857, the Poznań Society of Friends of Learning, and, established several years earlier, the Toruń Scientific Society¹⁸. The situation in the Russian Partition was decidedly more difficult because establishing societies, including scientific ones, after the fall of the January Uprising, was practically forbidden. One of the few societies that survived after the repressions following the fall of the January Uprising was the Warsaw Society of Physicians. It was only after 1905 that changes in this field were introduced in the area under Russian rule. Marek Drozdowski considered the establishment of the Society of Friends of History, the Society of Scientific Courses, the Society of the Public Library, the Society of the Reading Rooms in the city of Warsaw, the Warsaw Scientific Society, the Society of Polish Writers and Journalists, the Society for the Care of the Monuments of the Past¹⁹, to be the ‘fruit’ of the revolutionary-patriotic bids of that period. Beside those functioning in the Russian Partition, societies were established or reactivated in cities smaller than Warsaw, among others, in Vilnius, Lublin and Płock²⁰.

The all-Polish scientific conventions, the organization of which was given over to the members of the societies-hosts, were occasions for the exchange of scientific ideas, but also for social interactions to take place. The extensive press coverage in the daily newspapers in the three partitions turned them into festivals of Polish science. Additionally, Poles had an opportunity to see places connected with the glorious past of the nation and the state. That was because the conventions were for their participants an occasion for ‘patriotic pilgrimages’, their destinations being the former capitals – Cracow in the first place, but also Gniezno. Gustaw Manteuffell, who lived in the former Livonia, very emotionally recounted his impressions of the journey and stay in the first of the above-mentioned places. He wrote in his memoirs that “the mere sight of it [of Cracow – J.C.], even from the distance, always made a deep impression on each Polish heart. And which of us, having approached this treasure house of all that we hold sacred in our history, this Mecca and Medina of what Bolesław brought to life, the radiant glow of great events, burning not because of its own power, but because of the power of its own memories, is not, at that time, struck by the thought that many tears of joy and pain were shed here, many lightning bolts stroke our beloved castle town, the heart of our nation, because this is where all our

¹⁷ DYBIEC 1993.

¹⁸ SERCZYK 1999.

¹⁹ DROZDOWSKI, SZWANKOWSKA 1997: 5.

²⁰ KUNIKOWSKI 1999.

national misfortunes happened. But this is also where the nation has always sought consolation”²¹.

The visitor from Livonia, experiencing, on a daily basis, russification policy in his local homeland, appreciated the fact that the Polish language was used in public life. He observed that “the menu in the native language stroke my eye so nicely that I immediately pasted it into my Diary”²². During his national “pilgrimage” the visitor from a distant land saw the ‘Prussian Homage’ by Jan Matejko²³.

The impressions from the trip to Gniezno of Józef Rostafiński, an Austrian subject, were similar to those presented above. The trip was organized for the participants of the 4th Convention of Polish Doctors and Naturalists held in Poznań 1884. The above-mentioned scholar emphasised the historic value of Gniezno as the first capital of the Polish state. During his touring of the local cathedral he reflected on the beginning of the Polish state, the victory of the Polish troops over the Teutonic ones at the Battle of Grunwald. This revived hope for the possibility of restoration of Polish rule over the lands, experiencing, on a daily basis, germanization policy²⁴.

How important from the scientific and organisational point of view were the conventions held by Polish scientific communities was described in detail in a separate publication²⁵. It is worth mentioning here that such meetings were big undertakings for the organisers. From the very beginning they required cooperation embracing the three partitions. It was necessary, among others, to coordinate the programmes, the lists of the speakers and the question of publishing. An important role as regards relations at this stage was played by scientific journals published by the societies responsible for organising conventions. They informed on the state of preparation, the programmes planned, they presented texts of the most interesting speeches. It should be emphasised that an important source of information about conventions were – as it has already been mentioned above – daily newspapers. Their accounts of the course of meetings were sometimes more detailed than those given in professional journals. There were also special messengers working for daily newspapers who, on a regular basis, informed their readers about the accompanying events, as well as about cities-hosts.

Scientific conventions – as it has been stated above – were organized by societies. There are also examples of a reversed trend. Initiatives to establish societies or other forms of cooperation embracing the three partitions often came out at all-Polish meetings. The Society of Polish Internists is an example. The need for its establishment was put forward by the participants of the meeting of the internal medicine section of the 9th Convention of Polish Doctors and Naturalists held in Lviv in 1906. An initiative committee was appointed then, whose mission was to establish an all-Polish society that would embrace internists. This action was successful. In 1914 the 2nd Convention of Polish Internists in Lviv was organised by the Society of Polish

²¹ MANTEUFFEL 1903: 1.

²² MANTEUFFEL 1903: 51-52.

²³ MANTEUFFEL 1903: 100.

²⁴ J. Rostafiński, *Ze zjazdu poznańskiego*, „Czas” no. 133 from 12 June 1884, pp. 1-2.

²⁵ CABAJ 2007.

Internists, whose members from different Polish lands amounted to over two hundred at that time²⁶.

Conventions were also followed by initiatives aimed at collaboration in publishing professional literature. These actions, embracing the three partitions, were patronised later by societies. And again, the medical community provides examples - the question of normalising terminology used in all Polish medical journals was raised at the meeting of the medical press section of the 9th Convention of Polish Doctors and Naturalists in Cracow in 1900. The next step towards the integration of communities in the three partitions was the implementation of the initiative that was put forward at the consecutive medical convention, concerning the establishment of the Society of Polish Medical Press. That was the reaction of the Polish communities to the establishment of the supernational structures in the shape of the International Society of Medical Press set up in Paris in 1900.

The integration initiatives put forward at the all-Polish conventions were implemented in the form of co-operation between the societies which edited medical journals together. An example is 'Medical News' – an organ of the Medical Faculty of the Poznań Society of Friends of Learning. In 1913 among the cooperators there were representatives of Polish scientific communities from the three partitions and representatives of the Polish diaspora, among others, from Białystok – 1 person; Biekek (Herzegovina) – 1; Brussels - 1 (Józefa Joteykówna); Czerniowiec – 1; Częstochowa – 2 (among others, Władysław Biegański); Dąbrowa Górnicza – 1; Kiev - 3; Kobierzyna near Cracow – 1; Kochanówka near Łódź – 2 (among others, Witold Chodźko); Kaunas – 1; Cracow – 40 (among others, Odo Bujwid, Stanisław Ciechanowski, Bolesław Wicherkiewicz); Lviv – 22 (among others, Ludwik Rydygier); Paris – 2; Saint Petersburg – 1 (Prof. Józef Ziemacki); Pohulanki near Dźwińsko – 1; Poznań – 41; Prague – 1 (Prof. Jaroslav Hlava); Przemyśl – 1; Rudki near Mrozy – 2 (St. Gałęcki, T. Budzyński); Skierniewice – 1; Stanisławów – 1; Strasbourg – 2; Toruń – 4; Tuchola – 1; Warsaw – 48; Wiesbaden – 1; Vilnius – 3; Zagrzebie – 1; Zakopane – 3; Zawiercie – 1 and Złoczów – 1²⁷.

Sharing press organs by some of the medical societies was another evidence of the activities pursued over the borders of the partitioned Poland. An example is the journal "Medical Review. Medical Journal". Its first part was an official organ of the Cracow Medical Society and the Society of Galician Doctors, the Polish Society of Doctors and Naturalists in Petersburg, the Societies of Polish Doctors in Kiev and Chicago. The second part of the title – "Medical Journal" had a postscript - an organ of the Provincial Medical Societies in the Kingdom of Poland. This "double" journal was a weekly magazine published in Cracow²⁸. Prof. Stanisław Ciechanowski was the Editor in Chief of the whole magazine.

It is difficult to make an overall assessment of the specialist aspect of the conventions, the influence of the final resolutions that were adopted there on the scientific and professional communities in the three partitions. First of all, it results from the fact that the status of these meetings was not strictly specified. Are the conventions supposed to be decision-making centres, passing laws to be

²⁶ CABAJ 2007: 50-51.

²⁷ *Rozmaitości. Towarzystwo Lekarskie Krakowskie*, „Nowiny Lekarskie”, 1913, vol. 3, p. 164.

²⁸ From the title page, „Przegląd Lekarski. Czasopismo Lekarskie” no. 4 from 27 January 1912.

implemented, or are they places where opinions on important questions are expressed, or perhaps where mutual contacts and exchange of opinions and experiences between the three partitions take place? Until 1914 the problems were not solved and a uniform formula was not adopted. Some of the meetings had an opinion-forming character. Such were the proceedings of the orthographic section during the Convention of Polish Writers and Journalists held in Lviv in 1894. That was where discussions concerning the rules of spelling recommended by the Academy of Learning were carried out by linguists and the common stance was agreed.

From the very beginning some scientific and professional communities wanted the conventions to be forums for presenting scientific achievements and exchanging professional experience on the all-Polish scale. This formula of meetings was adopted by surgeons who organised their meetings in clinics and medical institutions. They put on their agendas the current problems connected with medical practice in this specialisation. A formula of conventions similar to that adopted by surgeons was accepted by internists.

Some communities which organized conventions intended such meetings to be decision-making forums. This meant passing laws. That was done at general conventions of technicians, doctors and naturalists. Some of the laws, referred to the administrative authorities, were not likely to be implemented in all the partitions. It was the ethnic composition of the clerical staff that was an obstacle. Only in the Austrian Partition the administration was Polish, in the two others it was in foreign hands. This observation was made at consecutive conventions after examining the reports on the implementation of the already-passed laws, many of which, concerning the Prussian and the Russian Partitions, were ignored.

The awareness of the limited possibility of implementing the laws in all the three partitions led to legal actions being taken only for Galicia. That was the area where, because of its autonomy, demands were addressed to specific recipients (the central and national offices, scientific societies, and others). Some of the laws passed for the Austrian Partition concerned Poles from other areas. That referred to resolutions on the Wawel Castle, which was devastated by a long-term exploitation by the Austrian army. Problems connected with the residence of Polish kings were raised at the conventions of Polish technicians.

In the case of the two other partitions the participants of conventions usually passed laws the implementation of which was dependent only on the members of individual societies. Such were, for example, the appeals addressed to doctors, raised at the 1st Convention of Polish Hygienists in Lviv, concerning the popularisation of the principles of hygiene among patients.

The great achievement of the conventions of Polish scientific and professional communities was the establishment of firm organisational structures in the shape of economic departments (committees), local committees and permanent delegations. They were responsible for the preparation of meetings and the implementation of final resolutions. A special role was played by permanent delegations, which took the form of legal, all-Polish representation of the scientific and professional communities in the period between the conventions. They represented the most important societies functioning in the three partitions. The earliest permanent delegations were established by technicians. They were followed by other scientific communities (doctors, naturalists, lawyers, economists). Permanent delegations of miners were especially

active. They organised all-Polish periodic meetings in the period between the conventions²⁹.

It is also the opening of Polish scientific communities to international contacts that deserves attention. That meant establishing relations with societies from other countries and participating in conventions organised abroad. Especially close were the relations between Poles and Czechs³⁰.

At the beginning of the 20th century, when the economic boom took place, Polish scientific communities made attempts at establishing collective, all-Polish representations at international conventions. This issue is raised in a separate publication. Here, we wish to remark that it was the Prussian subject Bolesław Wicherkiewicz (1847-1915), a professor at the Jagiellonian University and an outstanding ophthalmologist, who was first to take the initiative to establish Polish committees that collectively represented Poles from the three partitions and the emigration at international conventions. However, proposals Polish representatives put forward were often rejected. It was the opposition of the delegations of the partitioning powers that was most often the reason why the organising committees refused to register the Polish committee. There were exceptions. An example is the registration and admission, on equal terms with the representatives of other nations, of the Polish General Committee at the 5th International Gynaecological-Obstetric Convent in Petersburg in 1910. Similarly, a year later, at the 1st International Pedological Convent in Brussels, thanks to the head organiser Dr Józefa Joteykówna, the non-existent Poland was, as other countries, officially registered in the convent.

The integrating activities Polish scientific communities pursued in the second half and at the beginning of the 20th century, i.e. the co-operation of societies, the organisation of conventions whose participants came from the three partitions, or the struggle for the collective representation on the international forum, were important hallmarks in the history of the nation. They were a specific relay of generations in the service of the independent Poland. Among the initiators and first organisers of conventions on the all-Polish scale were, among others, A. Baraniecki, P. Girsztowt, Józef Dietl, Wiktor Szokalski, who participated in the uprisings happening between 1830-1831, 1846-1848, and in 1863, and many other patriots. They moved the idea of the armed struggle into the scientific ground. While the next generation, responsible for the organisation of meetings embracing the three partitions and the maintaining of relations, were those who, in different ways, laid the foundations for the independent Poland. They are, among others, Heliodor Świącicki, the first rector of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Paweł Gantkowski, one of those who set up the medical faculty there, or Alfons Parczewski and Adolf Suligowski, who helped to establish the legal order in the reborn state. Because of the actions mentioned above the scientific communities became integrated. That was an important contribution towards building the foundations for the independent Poland.

The creation of scientific ties favored the establishment of political cooperation. Although the organizers of the described meetings focused on scientific matters, the contact itself favored the creation of the unity of a nation deprived of its

²⁹ CABAJ 2007: 192-202.

³⁰ ŠTRBÁŇOVÁ 1990: 66.

own state, living within the borders of the three partitioning countries (Austro-Hungary, Germany, and Russia). Therefore, the foundations for the reconstruction of the independent Polish state were laid down by scientific ties.

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Summary

Scientific contacts as a factor in national integration in the Polish lands at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries

In the second half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century Polish scientific and professional communities took action to tighten contacts between compatriots living in the area of the three partitioning powers, and the emigration. This was a response to the unsuccessful attempts at regaining independence by using weapons. Engaging in scientific activity and building relations were supposed to replace the armed struggle. It meant that connections were established between Polish scientific societies, and first of all, conventions were organised. The initiatives taken on this forum served the development of Polish science and helped Poles to act collectively, which gradually assumed an organised form embracing the three partitions. Polish scholars also aspired to establish a common representation on the international forum. Such initiatives taken by scientific and professional communities largely contributed to the restoration of independent Poland.

Keywords: partitions, scientific societies, scientific conventions, disintegration and integration, struggle for independence