

# HOMO HOMINI LUPUS<sup>1</sup>

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The reporter of the *Rusскиye Vedomosti* has informed us from America regarding the latest acts of violence against the blacks.<sup>2</sup> One interesting matter which did not receive attention in our part of the world was that these riots began on July 4<sup>th</sup>, America's greatest day, its Day of Independence. On this day, a boxing match between two champions was arranged – Johnson and Jeffries. The reporter noted that outdoor boxing is prohibited except in Nevada and the competition, therefore, was held in one of the cities in that state. The news was communicated by special telegraph wires to the major cities, we are told, and all the newspapers had sent their sports writers there. Across America, crowds stood outside the editorial offices of the major local newspapers and loud-voiced gentlemen employed by the newspaper would announce moment-by-moment the latest occurrence: "Jeffries received a tremendous blow to his chin. --- Jeffries has fallen outside the ring". When it became clear that Johnson won, a black man victorious over a white man, it was as if with an agreed-upon signal, crowds rose across the country and perpetrated violence upon the blacks.

Blacks have become accustomed to these unpleasantries. But this incident was out of the ordinary for whereas these things happen regularly in the South, this time violence against blacks was committed in the northern cities as well. The usual excuse is a rumor that one of the local colored persons attempted "again" to rape a white woman which leads to a crowd

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<sup>1</sup> A phrase in Latin which translates as "man is a wolf to other men". The epigram appears in the dedication of Thomas Hobbes, "De cive", published in 1651. It indicates the evil of which humans are capable of doing to each other. Jabotinsky's article originally appeared in *Odesskie Novosti* on July 18, 1910, page 3. This translation was made from two Hebrew versions.

<sup>2</sup> In July 1910, race riots broke out across America following the Johnson-Jeffries heavyweight boxing match which was won by Jack Johnson, an African-American, over Jack Jeffries, a Caucasian, which was held on July 4, 1910 in Reno, Nevada.

of thousands gathering, searching for a black man to lynch – either to hang or burn alive. And by-the-by, another dozen blacks are beaten to death or shot with pistols simply because they happened to be in the way. This time, though, there was no such excuse. It was simply a plain matter of two broad-shouldered idiots who were hitting each other with their fists, in mutual agreement, with the permission of the local authorities and supervised by experts in intricacies of this fine art. Since it was the black man that won and there was a suspicion that other blacks in the land would be prideful, the white citizens of the great republic could not tolerate this. They sought to quash black pride and fell upon blacks in a proportion of fifty-to-one, smashed heads, trampled people and even acted cruelly to women and children. "In other eastern states," the correspondent writes, "blacks were ripped to pieces and hundreds were injured and crushed. In southern states, where the difference between blacks and whites is more strongly pronounced, the number of blacks that were hurt probably has reached several thousand."

What, then, is the backdrop that made these outrages possible? The United States, the most free republic on earth, the land whose political existence is the result of an uprising, is where 10 million citizens reside with a shocking lack of rights just because of the color of their skin. Previously, they were slaves. Later, the Northern states demanded an end to slavery and declared war on the Southern states which wanted to keep the existing order. The war ended with the victory of the northerners. The blacks were recognized as free citizens, with full and equal rights of the great republic.

Since then, almost fifty years have passed but if we were to relate seriously to this "equality of rights", not only would a black but also a white person would laugh in our faces. The inequality of this kind is incomparable to anywhere else in the cultured world even if also we included in this flexible definition Russia and Romania. First of all, this inequality has no escape route. A Russian Jew, if his spirit weakens, can always convert. The American blacks have been Christian for a long time and cannot take another step. Race cannot be erased. Intermarriage will also not help.

Even in later generations if a line appears on his lips, in the wave of his hair or at the edge of his fingernails, he will always be in the eyes of the citizens of his country black, as that is his fate. Theaters are closed to him, hotels, railway cars and schools. He is assigned special railway cars and narrow separate compartments on trams. The schools for the black children are built separate from those for the white children. They are cheaply constructed, inadequate and dirty. The political rights of the black citizen, "free and equal", come to naught. In the southern states, where masses of the blacks reside and where they potentially possess influence to affect election outcomes, there exists a whole system of cheating and falsification that voids the black vote. This system is fixed, permanently, and is practiced before the entire world. The president and congress know about this and no one would even think to shrug his shoulders for such is the system, accepted as it is as part of matters of state. In truth, how can black humans be permitted to decide the political fate of their country as equals to whites? Yes, equality is equality but, nevertheless...

In order to righteously justify themselves, white Americans make several claims, some not even worth a penny. They say: why should a black get an education? This race can't make any spiritual creation and not one genius has come out of its ranks. Those who say this well know that schools are not needed for fashioning geniuses but to convey knowledge, to raise the general level of education achievement for the masses. Moreover, it is well known that blacks possess wonderful talents, having a quick grasp of things and a good memory. They have excellent authors, preachers and professors. Surely, it is the "white taste" that is unsatisfied with the lack of geniuses. The blacks themselves are satisfied and that is what really matters.

It is impossible to place on one people the obligation to find favor with another people. What types of geniuses came out of the Bulgarian nation? Or the Turks? It is still an unresolved matter of dispute if the great American republic has provided the world with even one true genius. Even the Americans know this. They know very well that a "lack of genius" of one

race out of the many is not really a claim that can justify the negation of rights but nevertheless, they make use of it. They also say, in order to justify the general social boycott that is in place upon the blacks all throughout this country, that there is some force that is above the consciousness, something stychic<sup>3</sup> or the type of "nationalist aversion" of Mr. Struve<sup>4</sup>.

And it is that which causes white men to be unable to tolerate the proximity of the black. But this, too, is an intentional falsehood. Professor Münsterberg, who wrote an interesting book on the Americans,<sup>5</sup> attests to the fact that every white man, even the most extreme of the south, places his children without compunction in the care of a black nanny and will eat heartily in a restaurant with that nanny next to him feeding his child. But if a black woman would enter there and sit at a table in the corner opposite, as an equal, the white man will raise a ruckus. He'll gather around a crowd, announce a boycott of the eatery, break some windows and will assault the uppity black woman. This is not a physical aversion, but a conscious refusal to recognize the member of the other race as a person.

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<sup>3</sup> A Russian Marxist term. In sociological literature, the concept denotes natural or dynamic processes which are not within the sphere of man's consciousness and will. Inchoate.

<sup>4</sup> Pyotr Bergardovich Struve – (1870 – 1944) a co-founder of the liberal Constitutional Democratic party. Struve published an article entitled "The Intelligentsia and Facets of Nationalism" in *Russkaia Mysl* in late March or early April 1910 in which he expounded on his liberal outlook on nationalism. In the article, he used the term "ottalkivaneya" which, in his lexicon, meant an attitude of aversion to the other. In a communication from Professor Richard Pipes, he informs me that the term appeared "in a collective work called *'Po Vekham: Sbornik statei ob intelligentsii i "natsional'nom litse'* published in Moscow in 1909. In it, Struve indeed used the word "ottalkivanie" and "ottalkivat" several times. It simply means "revulsion". Eg: "The conscious initiative of revulsion (*ottalkivaniia*) from Russian culture, the assertion of Jewish 'national' peculiarity, comes not from the Russian intelligentsia but from that Jewish movement which is known as Zionism." (p.34)." My deep appreciation to Prof. Pipes. See also Shindler, Colin, "The Triumph of Military Zionism - Nationalism and the Origins of the Israelis Right", IB Tauris, London, 2006, p. 45. There may be a faint echo of this concept in Jabotinsky's assertion in his famous 1923 article, "The Iron Wall": "Emotionally, my attitude to the Arabs is the same as to all other nations – polite indifference."

<sup>5</sup> Hugo Münsterberg (1863 – 1916). a German-American psychologist. He was one of the pioneers in applied psychology, extending his research and theories to Industrial/Organizational, legal, medical, clinical, educational and business settings. Jabotinsky is referring to "*American traits from the point of view of a German*" (1901).

In one of the Russian periodicals a sentence spoken by a southern white appeared recently (and I quote from memory): “In essence, we like the black people. But what type? A black that knows his place; who doesn’t push himself into schools and theater”. And since the black is naïve, and still relates in a positive sense to his equality of the last half-century, and continues to push towards the doors of theaters and schools, and wishes to vote, and possesses a higher demographic growth than the white populace, the feeling of disdain in the white man is, at times, combined with concern. And this results in an inhuman anger, even animal-like, which breaks out regularly in the form of riots. Almost every summer the same event will be repeated: a young black man will make a gesture in a light-headed fashion, his hand outstretched towards a white woman, something men will do all the time, the lady’s escort will cry out that this was an attempt at rape and within five minutes, a large crowd will gather and the hunt for the black men will commence. Photographs of a lynching, the act in which the event usually ends, are terrible, even more so than a nightmare. Men, white men, citizens of the Republic, who are not intoxicated, who know how to read and write and who finished, in most cases, high school, who are dressed in proper clothes and starched shirts, push their way through, using their elbows, towards the black man to strike him with canes and clubs. They are humans who are arguing over the right to be the hangman, to hold on to the noose. At times, in rural areas, they engage in an old custom: they dip the black man in tar and roll him into feathers and set him afire. The police do not get involved and when some come to the police chief and request assistance, he shrugs his shoulders and says, ‘I am unable to help. I’m too short-handed’, a response we Jews know well, one even worse than this...

The 'Promised Land' appears to us from afar more pleasant than it is in reality. We, who do not possess a democratic constitution<sup>6</sup>, and moreover,

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<sup>6</sup> Although Russia gained a constitution in April 1906, just prior to the opening of the Duma, it actually defined the system of government as autocratic and stipulated that the Czar was supreme above the law, the church and the Duma.

have no constitution at all, would naturally tend to believe that a democratic regime provides a cure for all sorts of society's ills. In earlier times, people were fools and believed that freedom was even a sure cure for poverty. However, since then, the socialists succeeded in explaining to us that the poor will continue in their poverty even in a regime of general elections. There is, though, one belief that continues to exist since then which is that racial prejudice, as well as national and religious prejudice, are all supported by a system of one-person rule whereas in a democratic regime these prejudices would not be recognized and the citizens would not wish for them to be recognized. It was the socialists of all types who until recently tried to impress upon us that this was the case but this was a brash and bold lie.

Democracy in and of itself is good, all of us desire it and make efforts to achieve it. But there is no requirement to see a pie-in-the-sky dream and then make promises based on things that will never come about. Prejudicial racist views are rooted first and foremost in the masses. By investing power to the masses, the situation of those oppressed peoples does not improve. How are the Jews in Romania, with its constitution, helped? <sup>7</sup> What did the Jews gain in Finland since the most democratic elections system was introduced there? <sup>8</sup>

The matter of blacks in North America sheds a bright light on a sorrowful scene. In this situation, on the background of the most idyllic democratic possibility of complete freedom and broad self-rule rights, it is here that racial hatred exists in all its sinister forms that arouse horror. In Russia and Romania they at least attempt to cover their hate with reasons that are economic or political: the Polish nation is, as it were, revolutionary or it exploits the poverty of the masses. In America, they don't even try to make such excuses: the blacks are docile and naïve as sheep, as it were, and

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<sup>7</sup> The first constitution of Romania was adopted in July 1866.

<sup>8</sup> Equal suffrage was introduced in Finland in 1906. See further, p. 11.

almost all are employed in the lowest forms of crafts as salaried workers. In France and Germanic Austria, they try to justify anti-Semitism, explaining it as due to the riches of the Rothschilds or of the Viennese Jews termed Quasi-Juden. In America, there is no well-known rich person among the blacks. What we have is plain and simple hate of one race against another, a devious hate, wide-open for all our eyes, arbitrary, without reason and without cause. The reason in this instance of rioting was Johnson's victory over Jeffries. This, in the land of the most freedom, where all can read and write, crowned with the best of manners toward the white woman and child; this, in the land where the police and the courts do not fear any pressures from above. In a country such as this, and in such an environment, racial hatred appears, not by happenstance, but year in and year out, in various forms that are worse than the Kishniev pogrom<sup>9</sup> and more than the heroic actions of the Kurds in the villayettes of Turkey.<sup>10</sup> This is, it would seem, a sickness that even the right of popular vote and schools cannot heal.

But there is something deeper than democracy and even the education of the masses and it is the travails that a man himself undergoes as a test. It is commonly thought that one who is pressured by one stronger than himself will not himself in turn oppress someone weaker than him. We often pleasure our souls with nice hopes on the basis that a people that is itself in great difficulties will understand the situation of a weaker nation and its conscience will not permit it to measure another weaker nation to the proportion that it itself was measured. In light of the facts, this would appear to be a false hope. In Germany, the former generation that keeps the memory of the period when Germany was still not united is still living and recalls the time when Germany was quite fractured. This generation had nurtured in its heart the dream of unity, and prepared the ground for its arrival very thoroughly and with supreme heroism achieved their ideal.

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<sup>9</sup> In April 1903, forty-seven Jews were killed, 92 severely wounded, 500 slightly wounded and over 700 houses looted and destroyed in Kishinev. Two years later, in another pogrom, 9 Jews were killed and 56 were injured.

<sup>10</sup> Jabotinsky may be referring to the Battle of Senova and the victory of the Russian General Mikhail Dmitrievich Skobelev over Turkey in late December 1877 or a later campaign during 1880-1881.

And that very same generation, after just a short time, went to war with the Poles of Poznan.<sup>11</sup> Poland was in pieces just as previously, Germany was split up yet those who formed a united Germany would have thought surely that this parallel is but an emotional foolishness. Would the same German patriot of 1860 who shed tears when listening to village school pupils singing songs of a united Germany also have taken a strap to the Polish youngsters who refused to study religion in German? Only in the Bible is it written: “You should not wrong a stranger nor should you oppress him; for strangers you were in the land of Egypt”.<sup>12</sup> In our contemporary code of morality there is no room for this type of slobbering love and childish humanism of fellow man it would seem.

Humans can go even further. Not only does the remembrance of former pains not serve to prevent them from striking their fellow-man as they themselves were beaten just yesterday, but there are even worse incidents. A people can be suffering and complaining from another who is oppressing them and, at the same time, be cleverly oppressing another and more weaker group of persons. Just observe those Poles in Galicia, an area they feel themselves to be in charge. And see how they treat the Ruthenians! The Ruthenians<sup>13</sup> in Vienna publish a special monthly in German, *Ukrainische Rundschau*,<sup>14</sup> which devotes three-quarters of its contents to the travesties committed by the local Polish bureaucracy. Every speech uttered by Ruthenian representatives in the Reichstag is full of complaints and their press in Lemberg [Lviv/Lvov] only prints grievances. The Austrian constitution has established equality for all nations<sup>15</sup> but this is in principle. In practice, Ruthenians are under-represented in government officialdom and the legal structure. In local government, a small child could count the number of positions they hold, even in Eastern Galicia where they are the

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<sup>11</sup> Known as the 1848 “troubles”.

<sup>12</sup> Exodus 22:20

<sup>13</sup> Ruthenian was a ethnic-cultural term used to relate to East Slavic peoples. It was also used later to describe specifically Ukrainians.

<sup>14</sup> The *Ukrainische Rundschau* was published in Vienna in 1905–14 informing the Western public and policymakers about Ukrainian affairs in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Russian Empire. It was edited by Volodymyr Kushnir and Osyp Turiansky and supported by members of the Ukrainian Parliamentary Representation in Vienna. Its contributors included some of the most distinguished Ukrainian publicists and political figures of the time. (Source: Encyclopedia of Ukraine, vol. 5, 1993).

<sup>15</sup> Article 19 of the 1867 “Basic State Act” (*Staatsgrundgesetz*) proclaimed: “All races of the empire have equal rights, and every race has an inviolable right to the preservation and use of its own nationality and language”.



demographic majority. Their own primary schools are not at all numerous and their high schools don't exist whereas the lion's share of the government educational budget outlay goes to Polish school institutions. In the courts, the Pole always has the advantage over a Ruthenian in any instance where there is a clash. The police permit themselves to act harshly against Ruthenian peasants such as arbitrarily shooting poaching fishermen; killing them if there is a dispute with a Polish landowner. "Herds" of Ruthenians have been seen, hands tied behind their backs, being driven along the roads to the district city with rifle-butt blows, their wives running after them with children in tow, wailing, their voices heard, as witnesses have relayed, for a distance of a mile away. Elections to the Reichstag suffer improprieties and downright fraud of unheard types: either Ruthenian farmers who walk to town to vote are not allowed to enter the village limits or they manufacture counterfeit voting slips. This is certainly no secret; all the Reichstag, indeed all of Austria knows the nature of voting in east Galicia. There is even a popular term for it: *Galizische Wahlen*.<sup>16</sup> Internal national/ethno-communal strife is rampant throughout Austria including terror but nowhere does it reach the level of violence such as in Galicia. The murder of a Polish governor by the Ruthenian Sziczynski<sup>17</sup> could only have occurred in east Galicia and most of Ruthenian society expressed undisguised sympathy for the murderer. These are the results of what an oppressed nation, which has been given but a bit of power in a certain territory, can do to another.

What has resulted in this case has happened, in different forms, to the Jews in Galicia. In the courts, a Jew, especially a poor one, will not receive true justice if he is involved with a Pole. To the contrary, there are instances that a judge will shame and curse the Jewish witness, calling him 'Judas Iscariot' (such a judge is 'punished' in that he will be promoted). From a political outlook, the Poles see the Jews – and they do not hide this – as material to be exploited to strengthen their rule in the country. They do not recognize Jewish nationalism and when a census is conducted they will

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<sup>16</sup> Galician elections.

<sup>17</sup> On April 12, 1908, a Lvov student, Mieroslap Sziczynski, killed Count Andreas Potocki, Governor-General of Galicia Province who left a widow and 8 children. Sziczynski had participated a year earlier in riots at the University protesting the prohibition there of the use of the Ukrainian language. At his trial, he proclaimed he killed Potocki due to his favoring Polish gentry to the detriment of other classes of the population. Sentenced to death, his punishment was commuted to 20 years imprisonment but he escaped in November 1911. Thanks to Rina Kneizer for her research assistance.

register a Jew as “Polish” which thus creates a “Polish majority” in Galicia. In truth, the number of Poles and Ruthenians there are equal and of the 800,000 Jews, some 90% of whom are Orthodox, the males with curl-locks, their language Yiddish and they do not require a command of Polish. Jewish nationalism is persecuted in various manners. High school pupils were thrown out of school, accused of “Zionism”. In the last decade, many private schools were established to spread the Hebrew language and it is impossible to count the ways by which the Poles attempted to close down these schools including visits to check the sanitary conditions and in 75% of these visits, the team is astounded by the unhygienic situation of the wonderful but wretched children leading to the closures. As is well known, the Yiddish language is despised. In Lemberg a few months ago, a young lawyer who spoke in public in Yiddish was subjected to disciplinary punishment by the local lawyers’ guild. Not for the content of his words but the language in which they were spoken. All the Polish parties are united in hate against Jewish national elements, from the clericals to the social-democrats. All the Jewish groups are ostracized including the Zionists, the socialist Poalei Zion<sup>18</sup> and the Jewish socialist party, parallel to the Bund<sup>19</sup> in Russia, which considers the Jews a unique national grouping. In 1906, when the representative Straucher<sup>20</sup> arose in the Austrian parliament to first speak of the Jews as a nation, the Polish social-democrat Dashinski arose to heap scorn upon him. This becomes a double example: a member of an oppressed status belonging to an oppressed nation, a fervent nationalist himself, refuses to recognize the right of another people, oppressed even more, to achieve national existence of its own.

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<sup>18</sup> The Jewish Social Democratic Labour Party (*Poalei Zion*) was a Zionist Marxist political party in the Russian Empire. The party was founded in 1906 after the Bund (see note 19) rejected Zionism.. It later split, with a section merging into the Communist Party in 1922.

<sup>19</sup> The Bund (*Algemeyner Yidisher Arbeter Bund in Lite, Poyln un Rusland*) was a secular Jewish socialist party in the Russian Empire founded in 1897. It opposed Zionism, considering it a form of escapism. It promoted culture as the true fundamental of Jewish "nationalism" and justified life in exile. Yiddish was considered the Jewish national language.

<sup>20</sup> Benno Straucher (1854 – 1940) was born in Bukovina and was a Jewish community representative and from 1897 was a Jewish National Party representative in Austria’s Abgeordnetenhaus. He advanced a platform of Jewish autonomism, secularism, German culture and liberalism. He fought anti-semitism.

There is no need, in this respect, to refer to examples from abroad: in Russian Poland <sup>21</sup> we find many similar instances. To speak about this is difficult. In the modern press, it is customary to express deep sympathy for the condition of Russian Poland and not violate the general harmonic view. The other side of the Polish coin is avoided. But the reality of this 'other side' can be found in people living in very real torment and there is no reason to avoid this unpleasant truth.

Here is yet another example which, if talked about, will cause discomfort. In London, a short while ago, a "Congress of Oppressed Nations" was convened. <sup>22</sup> The Finnish delegate made a speech which could be described as a sort of *mea culpa*. She said, "We, too, have greatly sinned. We, who are under the sword of Damocles, have ourselves oppressed another nation – the Jews. There was a need to shake things up, but that has been done in too an extreme manner." <sup>23</sup>

Yes, in 'too extreme a manner'. And we wish to believe that the dark cloud over Finland will pass, and that it will dissipate without leaving a trace. But the truth must be stated: the pressure that the Jews of Finland bear does not compare in the least to that of those in Russia and Romania. There, the Jews are permitted to reside in but three cities (Helsingfors, Viburg and Abo). Outside those cities, no residency is permitted to a Jew, even temporarily, and any Finn can hand over to the police a Jew who is in contravention of this law. Most crafts are banned to Jews. Marriages are subjected to heavy regulations. Ritual slaughter - *shechita* - is outlawed. Permits for the construction of synagogues are difficult to obtain. Newly-arrived Jews cannot take up residency and there are veterans who are being kicked out without mercy. Jews possess, in absolute form, no political rights. The new constitution, praised for granting the right to vote to women, does not allow Jews to exercise the right to participate in

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<sup>21</sup> The territories considered "Russian Poland" were obtained through three 'Partitions' included first White Russia and Latvian Lithuania to the Dnieper and Dvina rivers, most of the western Ukraine, including Podolia and a part of Volhynia, then all of the eastern part of Lithuania and eventually, the rest of Lithuania and the Ukraine, the remainder of Volhynia, and the Duchy of Courland.

<sup>22</sup> Jabotinsky may be referring to the 1896 Second International Socialist Congress which adopted the new "right to self-determination".

<sup>23</sup> In mid-December 1908, hundreds of Jews were driven from their homes in Finland by Russian officials and many starved in the open fields where they were left stranded. The total population of Jews in the country at the time was less than 1500. See report in New York Times, December 26, 1908.

elections. There is democracy here, there is culture here and here also there is oppression and suffering but nevertheless...

So very wise was the philosopher who proclaimed *Homo Homini Lupus*, that a man acts towards his fellow-man worse than does a wolf. And for a long time still it will be completely out of our hands to set the situation aright through reform, not through political amendments or via cultural acts and not by the bitter experience of life. A fool is he who believes his neighbor, even a most good and pleasant one. He who trusts integrity and justice is a fool in that integrity exists only for the powerful and the stubborn. When you are condemned for your words which promote separatism, and a lack of trust and such, expressions that leave a bad taste, at times you wish to respond: yes, I am guilty!

I preach - and will continue to preach - on behalf of separatism<sup>24</sup>, lack of trust, to always be prepared and on the alert, with a stick hidden up my sleeve – for these are the things that allow us to exist among the wolves that fight...



- *Translated by Yisrael Medad*

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<sup>24</sup> By the term "separatism", Jabotinsky means the preserving of the unique national, ethnic, religious and cultural characteristics of the Jews so as not to be assimilated into the general populace.