What Bears Witness of the Failed Revolution?

The Rise of Political Antisemitism during the 1905–1907 Revolution in the Kingdom of Poland

Wiktor Marzec
Central European University
University of Lodz

This article investigates the rise of political antisemitism during the 1905–1907 Revolution in the Russian-controlled Kingdom of Poland. Extensive, diachronic discourse analysis of political leaflets reveals the role antisemitism played as a political device assisting the construction of new political identities and their dissemination through political mobilization. National Democracy and their labor branch, the National Workers Union, took the nation as the basic form of affiliation. The forging of such national unity, however, was difficult to engender among the workers owing to unique historical circumstances, the experience of exploitation, and longstanding socialist agitation. This process was aided, however, by the reference to a strong negative figure of the Other. When “nationalism began to hate,” antisemitism appeared to be an extremely effective mobilizing device, and the Jews started to act as a negative, constitutive point of reference for the construction of national unity among the Poles. The analysis of the mobilization process and focus on discourse as a main factor in shaping political identities demonstrates that National Democratic anti-Semitism was neither an automatic activation of already present popular anti-Jewish sentiments due to the rise of mass politics nor a sheer creation of nationalist ideologues. It was, rather, the logic of discourse that ushered a need for a negatively evaluated outsider, Jews being easily invested in this place due to a particular sociodemographic conjuncture and older judeophobic tendencies.

Keywords: anti-Semitism; 1905 Revolution; Russian Poland; National Democracy; socialism

Introduction

In the long story of Polish-Jewish cohabitation an outright hostility embodied in modern antisemitism was a relatively late—and crucially for this paper—rapid “invention.” Although researchers differ in their assessments of the reasons of its birth and growth, they almost all agree that before the 1880s antisemitism was neither a legitimate part of the Polish public sphere nor a political tool or active factor...
shaping politics. Moreover, it was not expressed in explicit anti-Jewish outbursts at the grassroots level.

Pre-modern judeophobia did not bear traces of modern antisemitism. The attitude to the Jewish population, leading a parallel, albeit a rather distant, existence from its Polish cohabitants, was saturated by religious bias; however, it was rather not an active factor shaping collective contentious behaviors. It was also not publicly induced, and in reverse, contested. Even when changing socio-economical circumstances started to stir up the population, early pogroms (much rarer and more modest than in the pale of settlement) were motivated by economic concerns and not targeted at particular people.

Massive political antisemitism—as an operative mobilizing device based on ethnic, religious, and cultural hatred—was to a large extent an invention of Polish National Democracy (ND, abbreviated as Endecja in Polish common political language) and gained a stable place in the public sphere at the turn of the century. It was not, however, constructed from scratch and utilized some threads from hitherto marginal antisemitic discourses that enabled it—once constructed and activated—to take hold so firmly. Nevertheless, it was the 1905 Revolution that ushered in antisemitism and the broader Jewish question (along with anti-antisemitism) as an issue on the top of political agendas and an extremely powerful political tool in the age of emergence of mass politics in Russian Poland. “While one may observe the gathering of storm clouds long before 1905, only after this year did the hurricane burst forth.”

The aim of this article is to critically explain the rapid rise of political antisemitism. First and foremost, I enmesh my questions and preliminary findings among the basic positions held by researchers in this field. Subsequently, I amend and refine the analysis of this process by incorporating an alternative methodological approach based on historical process tracing collated with diachronic discourse analysis. Looking at political fliers, I reconstruct the emergence of antisemitic discourse. I see the Jewish question as deeply embedded in the structural logic of discourse and resulting constraints in constructing viable political identities along the lines of class and nation. This leads to certain reformulations in the explanation of the rise of political antisemitism, supplementing existing assertions held by researchers in this field, and sheds new light on the antisemitic content of the National Democratic discourse.

**Party Ideologues and Popular Sentiments**

The gradual sliding of Polish National Democratic ideology into xenophobic nationalism and antisemitism in the late nineteenth century has been well documented in the existing literature. The same applies to social and economical explanations of its relative grip in the years that followed. There are, however, important differences in the lines of argumentation concerning the spread of antisemitism as an operative political machine, mainstream discourse, and mass mobilizing factor during and after the 1905 Revolution.
Historians agree concerning the profound influence of the Revolution for the political culture of the Polish Kingdom under Russian control. Workers who had had virtually no active political experience now entered the scene, participating in the political battles waged in complicated discursive settings. The limitations of public freedoms and the elusiveness of political gains that were canceled immediately after the tsarist regime regained some vigor did not prevent the Polish Kingdom from trespassing the threshold of mass politics and the inclusion of considerable new populations in the contentious politics of various kinds. Modern politics, for good and for worse, began. What else can be claimed for sure is that the October–November “Days of Freedom” in 1905 splintered the working-class movement in Russian Poland into a unified nationalist Right and a fractured socialist Left. For the very first time, National Democracy started to mobilize the workers and directly compete with socialists to articulate workers’ contention in a different way. Consequently, a rapid expansion of nationalist sentiments, severe interparty struggles, and mass electoral politics were accompanied by the emergence of political antisemitism in the Polish Kingdom.

However, various researchers offered variegated explanations of these processes grounded in slightly different epistemological perspectives and leading to alternative conclusions. According to the first line of argumentation, represented by scholarship focusing on Polish Jewry, the rise of political antisemitism during the 1905 Revolution was a by-product of the democratization of politics. When the masses entered the scene, popular sentiments, antisemitism included, started to play a crucial role in political mobilization. Therefore, National Democratic ideologies, who just started to appeal to workers, lower clerks, and petite bourgeois, had a useful discursive reservoir on hand. All that had to be done was to awaken ready-made popular sentiments, which appeared to be a very powerful mobilizing device. A recent example of this line of reasoning is Scott Ury’s contribution on Warsaw public politics during the period of the second and third Duma elections. It is worth quoting at length:

The party [National Democracy] . . . turned to anti-Jewish rhetoric as a means of generating popular support, delegitimizing Warsaw’s Jewish residents and defeating the liberal opposition. . . . Thus, by adopting antisemitic rhetoric and imagery, the National Democrats and associated organizations were able to kill three birds with one stone. First, they were able to politically rout the liberal and socialist opposition in the Duma elections of 1906 and 1907. Second, these steps helped the National Democracy delegitimize the socialist parties and Polish liberals by depicting them as partners in hostile, anti-Polish coalitions that were controlled by “the Jews.” Third, through repeated representation of “the Jews” as an inherently hostile force, the National Democrats clarified further the lines of exclusions and inclusion among both Poles and Jews.

Ury concludes this outline of the theory of “democracy and its discontents” (as the title of the chapter goes) with the somewhat frightening conclusion: “While
democracy may have brought many blessings, it also came with at least one curse that would scar Polish society for generations: political antisemitism.12 In detail, Ury admits that “the Jews” had not been a mainstream topic before 1905. What is more, they became one only when the Revolution entered the democratic phase, connected with the Duma elections and direct party competition for support, which was aimed more at shaping political identities than at the immediate mobilization of voters.13 The inference he makes is as follows: “the Jews” seen as enemy of Polishness, disciplined in voting and plotting against their “hosts” is a political invention of National Democracy sewed (and harvested) on the fertile soil of a popular, economic, religious, or ethnic antisemitism of the masses. Thus, ready-made antisemitism only entered politics during the Revolution, bringing along an inseparable burden of the “discontents of democracy.” However, Ury credits Brian Porter for investigating the rise of the intellectual configuration of Endecja antisemitism prior to the Revolution, claiming himself to provide just analysis of its massive reproduction. Nevertheless, the argument made previously by Porter is slightly different than Ury takes it, which bears important fruits for my forthcoming analysis. Let me now turn to Porter then.

Contrary to Ury, Porter argues that hatred toward Jews is not a sole outcome of otherness that could be mobilized by this or that political entrepreneurs. The rhetoric of conflict and exclusion appears in the very precise moment, when the antagonistic Polish-Jewish relationship is introduced. The change concerns a definite ideological-discursive repertoire:

The Polish–Jewish conflict did not simply emerge from objective social conditions; it was necessary to give meaning to difference before difference could become meaningful. Diversity is always present in the world, but the idea of an antagonistic and eternally unfamiliar “other,” the concept of “them,” has a specific intellectual history.14 Therefore, antisemitism, also as a political mobilizing device, is not “just emanation of popular attitudes” but includes “public discursive frameworks” that enable the efficiency and meaning of antisemitism in politics.15 Porter investigates a relevant—complex, albeit not so long—intellectual history: from the 1880s onwards, along with the growing divergence between post-positivist Polish radicals, and crystallizing of the National Democratic program, the envisioned national community started to be placed in a changed time horizon. Instead of an optimistic belief in social and national reconciliation in the future (still shared among Polish socialists), Endecja preferred to see the people as an empirical and ethnically defined entity.16 This ushered its discourse to the world of Spencer and Gumplowicz,17 where a current, vicious struggle over limited resources was an ultimate reality.

In the truly late nineteenth-century worldview of Roman Dmowski,18 detouring from popular radicalism to organicist nationalism, it was obvious that the Jews would try to struggle for their own interests, thus endangering the already precarious Polish
nationality. Around 1902, he started to believe in a kind of Jewish conspiracy against the Poles. Simultaneously associating the Jews with humanistic cosmopolitanism, dispersion and disorder paved the way for associating the Jews with socialist anarchy or the other way around.

Thus, Porter argues that the vitriolic nationalism and ethnic hatred breeding in *Endecja* discourse were not an outcome of the emergence of mass politics. On the contrary, they were present among *Endeks* (i.e., members and ardent supporters of National Democratic movement) prior to this, and actively transformed the public sphere in a way corresponding to the National Democratic worldview. Moreover, it was by no means an emanation of popular sentiments waiting to be awakened in the days of democratization. It was not the Revolution that was a harbinger of antisemitism but *Endecja* who introduced it, using the massive politics only as a carrier to spread it all over political discourse in the Russian Poland.

This spread was a relatively rapid process. The timing is an indirect evidence of the discursive nature of the change. Concerning the speed with which antisemitism conquered the Polish political sphere, there are no doubts left that where the profound change occurred was in language, metaphors, rendition of identities, or more broadly, discourse—to put it differently, in all that enables us to grasp the meaning of the reality we perceive. Here Porter is perfectly right. However, as Ury notices, he fails to offer an explanation for how it happened that a voluntary ideological creation of a handful of intellectuals and political ideologues so intensively grasped the subjects engaged in the contentious politics in 1905–1907 and after. Nevertheless, Ury in turn misses the point, not recognizing the internal dynamic of political discourses and identities during the Revolution. Instead, I argue that the rise of political antisemitism is neither an outcome of democratization and the inclusion of proletarian masses into politics, and nor was it an outcome of sheer ideological operation. Instead of looking for a “third” way, marrying the aforementioned lines of argumentation, I look for a theoretical explanatory device that may allow for better understanding of emergence of political antisemitism in a complex, self-inducing “feedback loop” between discourse, ideology, and popular sentiments.

### The Logic of Discourse during the Revolution

It is easily graspable with a diachronic look on the political discourses of the Revolution that antisemitism was not an issue and was not used politically (furthermore, even if it was, those attempts failed miserably) not only before the revolutionary surge but until even late 1905, when important reconfigurations of the political field occurred. What factors decided that political antisemitism appeared a useful supplement enabling the reconfiguration of the political field and furnishing of a new Polish-national identity? Political process tracing and extensive analysis of the political discourse directed at the mass receivers can shed light on this problem. A
careful examination of the crystallization of political blocks and transformation of affiliations among freshly politicized proletarians encourages us to pay more attention to the logic of discourse as such.

The latter, as deplorable in the given historical circumstances, executed certain constraints on political thinking and action. Any ideological transformation does indeed owe much to the intentional conduct of key actors (politicians, conceptual innovators, agitators, grassroots leaders, contentious claimants, striking workers, etc.). However, a discursive change and corresponding action are outcomes of the complex interaction of intentional actions with structural constraints of the sign system. The latter are deployed in a given historical circumstance in a different way. Any abstract logic or structural conditions of a signing system are not operational without being re-articulated (and thus altered) in an actually existing historical actualization. Obvious enough as it is, such a dictum nevertheless sensitizes the analysis for non-personal, non-conscious, and non-subjective discursive and interpretative schemes and constraints which do shape politics in at hand social-historical context, both on the side of political elites and massively mobilized common people.

Political actors, acting in a sedimented setting of social logics, economic circumstances, and so on, are actively competing to connect worlds with words in ways true and politically operative according to their political commitments, and disseminate particular discursive deployments and identities. However, not every position is imaginable and possible to take. Moreover, some paths are viable, but others are blocked, counteracted by others or simply not possible to ground in any massive response. Only some ideas “grip” the subjects and are reinforced by a kind of a recursive feedback loop between the mass contentious groups and party leaders or intellectuals trying to direct political events in a desired direction. In other words, political activists from competing ideological milieus were all pushing rival vocabularies, carrying along particularly patterned social imaginaries, culturally embedded structures of senses and politically defined friend–foe distinctions. However, these terminologies were not to be developed entirely arbitrarily. They could not have caught on unless the sentiments, desires, and concerns of some larger audience could be successfully reconstructed and articulated through those terminologies. Thus, the activists were not able to invent and disseminate entire worldviews as if they were applying paint to a blank canvas, but neither were the activists merely giving words to pre-existing sentiments. Last but not least, some discursive strategies backfire and unintended consequences play a crucial role in the redevelopment of political discourses and corresponding popular politics.

For a careful articulation of theoretical premises with the historical analysis, a brief outlook on discourse theory might be helpful to investigate what kind of constraints or logics might have been staying behind given discursive deployments and corresponding historical realities. The aim is not to privilege discourse over social analysis and abstract theory over historicist sensitivity but to supplement the latter two with additional explanatory capacities.
Post-structuralist discourse theory assumes that all existing objects and actions are meaningful because of a historically constituted set of rules. The research framed in these terms seeks to reveal how social practices generate and question discourses constituting social reality. The very existence of these practices is conditioned by the fact that the systems of meaning are contingent and never exhaust the whole possible quantum of meanings in the given social context. Therefore, discourse theory aims at studying patterned deployments of meanings and their temporary stabilization, concerning identities, and assessment of natural and social processes and the like. Regularities in them could be approached in terms of logics, comprising the whole edifice of discursively mediated practices. Logic is “a rarefied system of statements, that is, a system of rules drawing a horizon within which some objects are representable while others are excluded.” I investigate above all the political logic during the revolution, standing behind the rise of political antisemitism. This political logic outlined conditions of possibility for actually existing deployments of meanings. Thus, for instance, it predefined a viable path of (re)construction for national identity and its, so to say, side outcomes. By the latter, I mean paralleling redefinitions of antagonisms or constitutive others. “Political logics aim to capture those processes of collective mobilization precipitated by the emergence of the political dimension of social relations, such as the construction, defense, and naturalization of new frontiers.” Such a frontier is an exclusionary border separating the other from the inside of the established polity, thus securing its coherence through a reference to the negative, albeit constitutive, outside. This mode of reasoning will unfold in the following argument.

Attempts to construct a unifying, symbolic fullness and subsume respective demands under it were also present in the politics of revolutionary Poland, when one tried to create new political identities out of a multitude of social conflicts. Party programs were a bedrock for emerging political identities among workers. In what follows, I analyze programs and ideological agendas as expressed in political leaflets, as performative texts actively interacting with their readers on the streets and shop floors. Reference to the efficiency of this mobilization through the process tracing of the revolutionary upsurge allows to investigate the ideological shifts, actual identities built, and exclusionary logic inherently present in a serious reconfiguration of the political field experienced by the participants of the dramatic events of the 1905 Revolution.

**Route of Political Differentiation**

“Bloody Sunday,” when tsarist soldiers in St. Petersburg fired at the crowd led by pop Gapon, carrying icons and portraits of the hitherto praised Tsar, was much more than an event triggering the revolutionary process in “mainland” Russia. Somehow, astonishingly for many those days, it instantly catalyzed outbursts of riot and resistance in the areas at the fringes of the Russian empire as well. It was a direct
impulse or a spark initiating mass resistance expressing already accumulated tensions and dissatisfaction, which manifested itself in the general strike in January 1905 in the Kingdom of Poland under Russian control. In the first phase, it was rather a general resistance and refusal of further participation in a system of oppression. Directly after that strike, the Warsaw governor general admitted that initially “workers, having ceased to work, did not raise any claims.” However, an amorphous refusal gradually changed its character, a certain structure of revolt began to crystallize, and various, alternating sets of demands emerged, along with symbolic points organizing the struggle. In the very process of shaping certain political positions, of changing amorphous objections in a structured political field, a segmentation and partition of particular political identities could be followed. Here, as will appear, lies also the key to the emergence of political antisemitism.

The aforementioned hardships of proletarian life and growing popular opposition provided opportunities for political mobilization initially championed by the Polish Socialist Party. The impetus for a proletarian riot began to crystallize by means of a relative reference towards an all-encompassing systemic oppression, which found its initial incorporation in the tsarist regime. For instance, a proclamation of another major combatant for workers’ political commitments, the Social Democracy of the Polish Kingdom and Lithuania (internationalist left [SDKPiL]), announced: “Our biggest enemy, and protector of all our enemies, is the tsarist regime. We shall direct our struggle against it!” At the beginning, almost every political program was at least partially based upon a rising hostility against the tsarist regime. Thus, initially, among socialists, as well as among the industrial bourgeois, the strike was interpreted as a political expression of resistance against the tsarist regime. Indeed, such a negative reference was an important factor of its coherence and intensity in the first phase, although it is not clear to what extent conscious anti-tsarist political agenda was directly at play among workers.

The very articulation of a voice of refusal and partial recognition of this act as legitimate in a broader social context certainly was a milestone. After this first achievement, the economic demands gained more significance, aiming at a more concrete utilizing of the mass political action. These struggles also won partial success, but this success severely affected the character of subsequent strike waves—the support, or just acceptance, by non-proletarian social strata diminished or entirely disappeared. The negative unity against the occupant receded to give place to an antagonism defined in economic terms, because of successful economic claims inducing further ones and ideological work of socialist parties of all denominations as well. The bourgeois was somehow relocated in its political position and included in a group hostile toward proletarian demands; not the division “the people vs. the foreign invader” but “the people vs. the regime of exploitation” (the Tsar along with capitalism) began to organize the political field.

In the meantime, the revolution brought about massive political participation in various forms of publics. Although it was not a time of direct struggle for voters, as
none of the Duma elections had started yet, its possibility was already in the air: Bulygin’s project of state reform and introduction of advisory parliament was already discussed, however never put into practice. Nevertheless, it is hardly possible to claim that it was not a time of mass politics. Thousands of workers were striking, protesting, and marching. Those who earlier were rather passive and politically unaware began to enter various forms of the public sphere. Membership in all parties was rising high, from tiny, cadre organizations to mass membership. Political parties organized not only economic strikes but also well-advanced public activities. During the heated days of 1905, they formed factory committees responsible for managing labor resistance and negotiating with factory owners; mobile agitators were moving from one factory to another to organize agitation assemblies where workers gathered to listen to, and discuss political programs. Politics became massive but still antisemitism was not ushered to the public by any political force (which political leaflets testify) or grasped the workers (which is reflected in tsarist administration reports). Till this time (about June 1905), antisemitism was not an issue, and none of the leading parties utilized it as discursive strategy or political tool.

What is more, numerous examples demonstrate how in this period parties (socialist, progressive) explicitly called for national unity against the tsar or a class one against the bourgeois oppressors, neither of which excluded Jews from the assumed polity.

As the SDKPiL leaflet asserted,

January and May days, proletarian revolution, which had broken out in our country . . . ,

torn the society into two hostile camps. . . . One of them—representatives of conciliatory position, standing on the side of despotism falling into ruins, knights of capital, privilege and exploitation. On the other side—we, the camp of the Polish proletariat.

This proletarian camp was brought to life by an almost messianic or Paulinian gesture of canceling all sectional divisions in the name of universal, chiliastic emancipation, as proclaimed in another leaflet issued by the Polish Socialist Party (PPS, national socialists combining class and national struggle), explicitly calling the negative unity against the tsarat again:

[Hatred against tsarat] became a cement, which even more strongly unified various parts of the Polish proletariat into one magnificent power. In the fighting lines, we see neither Jews nor Germans, nor Russians, but only workers, struggling with a monster of the tsarat for the freedom and happiness of humanity.

And these calls certainly did not remain in vain. The tsarist administration, which cannot be accused of harboring sympathy for rioters, repeatedly reported astonishment that Polish and Jewish workers marched together and gave honors to the comrades killed by the tsarist troops. It was then that one of the tsarist dignitaries noted:
When during the riots a Christian is dead, the Jews come to his funeral carrying banners with inscriptions in Jewish language [Yiddish—WM]. The majority of agitators giving speeches over the grave are Jews as well. When a Jew is laid dead, the situation is reciprocal.40

Sporadically, socialists warned the workers in the leaflets, that the proletarian unity and solidarity with Jewish comrades should be kept in case tsarist emissaries attempted to induce anti-Jewish unrest. Consider, for example, this SDKPiL leaflet:

Revolutionary working people have not been deluded and have not believed the government of murderers. Then, the government took a different old measure against the revolution: threw its black hundreds, policemen and thieves against the Jews, striking workers, revolutionaries, and students.41

The fact of undertaking such a problem is an implicit evidence that the parties were afraid of such a scenario, already known from the cities further East. There is no way to inspect in detail the state of mind of participating workers.42 What we can do instead is to pay attention to the performative aspect of political discourse, which is always produced in given circumstances and contains definite illocutionary and perlocutionary force. Collating a statement with its intended consequences and forthcoming outcomes (not always identical) allows to reveal the facticity of language and its contexts. The things done with words is here undoubtedly stressed through the deployment of assertive-performative sentences, stating something about the (desired, “true”) workers and simultaneously encouraging the (empirical) workers to stick to this ideal benchmark.43 Whatever the hidden transcripts among the readers workers might have been, socialist strategy was clearly and unanimously anti-antisemitic. This itself implicitly points at the fact that antisemitism was a matter of concern, if not already an actually existing problem. Nevertheless, as the aforementioned examples demonstrate, such politics was successful up to a certain point of the revolutionary process (we will see which one). It instilled antisemitic sentiments regardless if they were to some extent present among workers or were rather an outer threat demanding preventive measures, let alone projections of the party leaders (not free from intelligentsia elitism prone to imagine uncontrolled outbursts of rioting mob). In a similar spirit, another leaflet stated very clearly that any anti-Jewish hostility induced by the administration would not be tolerated:

The tsarist government wants to organize a pogrom against the Jews—let’s tell that the pogrom cannot happen, that not only we will not plunder and murder our Jewish brothers, but that we are ready to step out in their defense at any time.44

Another dimension visible here is that the issue of germinating anti-antisemitism is also explicitly referred to the tsarist government as the only active agency initiating pogroms or anti-Jewish hostility.
The government pretends to be neutral but everybody knows that it is not anybody else who organizes such atrocities. So, the government let loose the hordes of thieves against the peaceful Jewish population, allowing for cruel crimes and horrible bloodshed.45

The fear of such a danger seemed predominant and similar voices intensified after the attempts to initiate pogroms, unanimously associated with a tsarist provocation.46 Regardless of the possibly existing popular support for the anti-Jewish unrest, socialists remained clear: those who engage in any anti-Jewish activity is an ally of the tsarist black hundreds. Nothing could testify more for an unambiguous line of division, which was maintained in socialist propaganda content. Moreover, it is rather unlikely that any socialist writer would spare a libel of antisemitic intriguers if it could be used against any other political opponents, if only antisemitism had already raised as an issue among various Polish parties. Indeed, at least some tsarist officers tended to believe (or at least claimed so in their reports) that it was the Jews themselves who provoked the proletarian raids. Unsurprisingly, in official reports this alleged Jewish participation was given as a reason for anti-Jewish hostility.

Workers understood that they were mistaken when influenced by mostly Jewish agitation, which also explains a mass exodus of Jews from Łódź. This sobering of Christian workers is now turning into indignation against the Jews47

Apparently, even though Russian officers already associated socialism with the Jews, they failed to convince the socialists themselves and their proletarian disciples. Moreover, their attempts were met with indifference by the workers and kind of ironic re-appropriation by the socialist writers. For instance, the following PPS leaflet acclaims a lion share of Jews sacrificing their life for the workers’ cause:

The government is angry with the Jews . . . because the Jews take an active share in all revolutionary movements and do not spare their blood . . . This Jewish blood, which melted with Polish and German flowing into street sewers of Łódź, this blood demands only one hatred—against the tsarat.48

One thing is undoubted here: it was not a libel to be associated with the Jews, and claiming officially that the Jews are an important pillar of the socialist movement was not a political suicide. The situation was about to change rapidly with the growing presence of the National Workers Union (Narodowy Związek Robotniczy [NZR]), tightly connected with National Democracy, on the political scene.49

**Antisemitism at the Gates—The Political Triumph of the NZR**

The timing here is not coincidental: the beginning of National Democratic agitation among workers coincided with rise of political antisemitism. However, I neither
claim that it was Endecja’s proletarian branch, which was the sole harbinger of political antisemitism, nor do I look for the answer who is to blame, the “elites” or “the masses.” There are no simple causal connections that go directly in this or that direction. One should not replicate the elites–masses dichotomy, being undoubtedly present in the thinking patterns of the time, but not sufficient as explanatory matrix today.50 The issue here is rather a general reconfiguration of the political field, and the discursive constraints that made the rendition of National Democrats’ preferred political identity impossible without reference to the strong constitutive outside. The constructing of national unity and a corresponding nationalist proletarian identity was not an easy task. The management of fear of the Other threatening the community, but simultaneously securing its unity, was the crucial step to be made. Ushering this negatively evaluated Other secondarily confirmed, validated, and enforced already existing predilections of Endecja political leaders.

The dissolution of the primary negative unity, opposition against the repressive regime, launched struggles for the realization of various configurations of the political field. During that time of mass political mobilization and the birth of modern political subjectivities of labor, a hegemonic struggle for their symbolic organization was waged. Various visions of political struggle and various programs for coping with current problems, which were often diverse, contradictory, and oppositional, were proposed to workers who were lacking in political consciousness and solid political commitments.51 Parties competed above all for creating a certain sense of affiliation among the workers, an identification with a definite set of meanings, or an investment in given symbols. The stake of this rivalry was the political identity of workers. Possible configurations and deployments, the architecture of political subjectivities absorbing different unfulfilled demands, and available paths for the construction of hegemonic articulation were extremely diversified.

Nevertheless, the political field and the discourses constructing proletarian identities were not entirely arbitrary. Although any stable, unmediated reference of social-economic position to its political representation (say political subject positions) is never possible—and actually existing identities always bear a trace of contingency and intervening heterogeneous factors of discursively rendered identification, the hegemonic, discursive operation of its construction does not take place in a void. All articulations, binding elements into socially meaningful moments, are done in a pre-existing, historically sedimented settings.52 Therefore, the social logic (say practices of class division) and economic factors (the worsening of the worker’s situation, capitalist exploitation) already deployed in a discursive realm are relatively stable, and they help to trace the borders of possibility of any change brought about by political actors.

Thus, making the national unity meaningful for the workers, although not devoid of any preexisting elements to be built upon, was a process that had to be carried out against the everyday experience of shop-floor exploitation, and the once deployed socialist mapping of the social world that had already become the common language
to explain the world for the workers. Even if the same oppression very often could be coded nationally (Polish worker vs German foreman in the factory or exploitation of German/Jewish entrepreneur), providing a meaningful evidence of cross-class national unity still was a challenge. For sure, national identity of the workers was not the artificial invention of NZR and had some presence before the Revolution. Laura Crago has convincingly documented its social and economical background in the preceding years. German cultural hegemony and organizational domination encouraged workers to construct themselves as working-class Poles, striving for recognition of their cultural specificity (language, professional habits) and improving their job opportunities, however, mostly against Germans and not Jews. Nevertheless, as a political program and coherent identity explicitly antagonistic in relation to their socialist coworkers, nationalism was an offspring of the Revolution and the emergence of NZR. Considering the range of support for the NZR among workers and the intensity of their engagement, it cannot be written off as the “bourgeois manipulation of uneducated masses” of unconscious workers. How, then such reconstruction of political field and political identities of workers looked like in detail?

“We, the workers—Poles,” announced the proclamation of NZR, “consider the national solidarity as a primary unity consolidating us together; our holiest obligation is above all to respect this solidarity. That meant abstaining from strikes in the name of national prosperity. “We call You, then, brother-workers to interrupt occupations in factories, to firmly resist against the pressure of agitators, to hold back any manifestations, processions and, last but not least, military actions, bearing in mind the calamities it would bring.”

To ground such a position and forge a coherent national identity among workers more feasible, a reference to outer enemy was a great assistance. Seemingly, the opposition to build upon was at hand: Poland was partitioned under three imperial powers, and young nationalism above all directed its political energies against them to struggle for independence in the long run. Nevertheless, a problem appeared in the very heart of nationalist attempts at political practice and mobilization. The long present outer threat of foreign rule, which had taken away Polish independence, center of Polish romantic imaginary, inherited by positivists and finally by National Democrats, was impossible to use in new circumstances. The outer oppressor, as demonstrated above, during the revolutionary unrest was already a main addressee of political contention organized by the socialists.

No wonder then that the tsarist regime, although explicitly contested by national Democrats, was not the best candidate to secure the unity of the nation. Even though the tsarat was a traditional enemy of Polish national struggle from the very beginning of strives for regaining independence, it no longer posed an appropriate focal point of negative unity for the newly constructed political identities of the workers. First of all, this was precisely the systemic oppression still attacked severely by socialists; thus, any replication of such an opposition would not allow Endecja to differentiate themselves enough.
Furthermore, and most importantly, Endecja gradually distanced itself from any revolutionary upsurge, becoming openly hostile to it in the end of 1905. Fighting revolutionary “anarchy,” successfully managing fears of destabilized society and profiting heavily from general tiredness with the revolutionary unrest, National Democrats felt uneasy about defining the tsarist regime as the main enemy. Indeed, this would be difficult to do when simultaneously condemning the struggles with tsarist troops with such an inflammation. Proclaiming to be main defenders of “order” and championing modern anxieties, intensified by the revolutionary dislocation, political practice of Endecja to some extent converged with efforts made by the tsarist state, equally aiming at effectively governing such unrest and maintaining the existing order.

For instance, Endecja referred to armed resistance or open street rallies as “anarchic, demoralizing the spirit and decomposing national powers, or pointless riot (ruchawka)” and participating workers were referred to as an “unconscious mob, incapable of self-control.” Investing this anarchic, chaotic, and uncivilized pole of cultural signification with all elements associated with political enemies was a logical next step. This also allowed to effectively “suture” discontents of modernity with Jewishness and socialism/revolutionary anarchy. Unleashed market forces might have been put into this bucket equally well. Interestingly, however, capitalism largely disappeared from nationalist discourse during the Revolution. The reason was a serious ideological transformation of National Democracy.

Party thinkers went a long way from popular radicalism to conservative right representing middle and affluent social strata, profiting widely from capitalist relations already common in the Russian empire, and especially its Western fringes. Although national democratic ideology used to have a strong populist content, and for long the nation was virtually identical with the people (lud), the turn of the nineteenth century was marked with a pivotal transformation of Endecja from a progressive national-populist party to the new Polish right, substituting the old aristocratic formation on this side of the political spectrum. Certain reference to long-deployed patterns of Polishness based on noble class ethos was necessary to avoid having to build a national identity from scratch. Thus, an initial and severe critique of the malfunctions of the Polish nobility gave place to the general pride of past Polish (noble class) glory. Consequently, the new nationalist program had to sublimate class differences and antagonisms for the sake of a new national unity, which was by no means an obvious experience those days. However, nationalist programs and their relevant political mobilizations tend to be most effective when successfully integrated with some social claims. Thus, only if the nationally defined group is relatively homogenous in class terms and deprived of significant privileges or possibilities in the ruling state can powerful social energies be created in the name of national revival.

In such unfavorable circumstances, an additional factor ensuring coherence of national mobilization was needed, and the “othering” dynamic not without
a scapegoating supplement came to the fore. In order to simultaneously retain its credentials as a nationalist movement while securing the preservation of existing social order whose chief guarantor was the tsarist state, National Democracy had to find other “anti-Polish” forces than the Russian tsar. Undoubtedly, National Democrats could not and did not want to resign from the opposition against tsarat entirely. Nevertheless, the cohesion of the national identity had to be organized in an alternative way.

The figure of the other, as non-assimilable outsider, which could be a foundation for constructing the national community, was an important part of the National Democratic discourse. It enabled drawing a clear line of antagonism dividing the social field and the relational integration of one’s own identity. Somehow paradoxically, in that matter Endecja joined in unison with tsarist attempts to disperse class as a main form of affiliation, capable of mobilizing workers politically. Both National Democrats and Tsarists were striving to prevent the workers from constructing a consolidated class identity. They fruitfully utilized in their political practices the introduction of additional sectional divisions and attempts to relocate the main line of antagonism. On the one hand, one attempted to shatter the unity of class demands. On the other hand, in the case of National Democracy, there were attempts to introduce new rifts, which enabled the relational, negative creation of an alternative national identification.

Thus, to establish this problematic, national unity, National Democracy did not hesitate to clearly exclude Jews, who in the National Democratic discourse were designated the role of the Other already before. Earlier intellectual predilections of National Democrats were combined with particular conjunctural situation and residues of pre-modern popular anti-Judaism to create a powerful interpretation of current predicaments and antagonisms. Ceaseless attempts were undertaken to convince Polish workers that indeed the Jewish proletariat initiated disturbances, which negatively influenced the condition of the Polish economy and Polish workers. Moreover, ND discouraged Polish workers from acting in solidarity with Jewish workers or just incited hostility against Jewish colleagues.

In the course of the Revolution, as ND and NZR were increasingly critical of the revolutionary surge, and the general revolutionary disorder went further, a scapegoating effect was put into operation. „The Jews” were rendered as a foreign element inducing disorder in the name of its own profits and gains. The revolution was secretly made in the name of Jews: “A reason [for a strike] could be always found: . . . unfulfilled Jewish demands or the like,” unambiguously suggested one of the leaflets. This kind of Jewish interest was a hidden agenda of socialism, as NZR leaflets and articles insinuated, thus constituting a bedrock for a racialization of the political difference, utilized in countless occasions later.

It is high time every worker understood, that listening to any orders, without even asking in whose name and in what aim are they given, is an affront for him. Who is ordering
us? Who is pretending to be our rulers? Hobbledehoys and noisy Jewish snotnoses [chłystki i żydziaki krzykliwe].

“The Jews” can harvest not only on the gains of the Revolution but even more profit on its failure, and calamity for the Poles. That is why they mislead the Christian workers in a false unity: “Revolution . . . would be profitable for the Jews, who after our weakness and harassment could even more spread all over the country.”

This line of argument was complicated by the fact that these were actually the Poles who gained some freedoms (also in the realm of language, schooling, i.e., realms so precious for Endecja). Simultaneously, Endecja looked for a language to describe the discontents of modernity, intensified by the Revolution. It was not possible for the progressive, explicitly modern National Democrats fighting for cultural autonomy of the nation, to unambiguously condemn neither modernity nor the cultural gains of the Revolution. (Un)luckily “the Jews” fitted perfectly as a referent invested with all the amorphous negativity. Thus, they were accused of bringing modern discontents, capitalist speculation, and socialist destabilization alike. Simultaneously associating the Jews with socialism deligitimized a competitive language making sense for the modern world. Last but not least, “the Jews” were condemned for bringing revolutionary disorder, a move that merged the dangers of a victorious socialism and a defeat of the Poles. Thus, “the Jews” could be held responsible for any disadvantage for the Poles, seen both as an imagined nation dreamed of by National Democrats and a common people in the here and now, whom National Democrats tried to convince to identify with this nation. This complex position, clearly having a structure of phantasm combining contradictory elements with no obvious connection, appeared to be a powerful political machine.

A feedback loop moved on, where certain identities and political agendas where reinforced in a process of dynamic interaction between political discourse and popular response, while other messages were incapable of spreading so widely. Such process, seen through the lenses of a logic of discourse, explaining the construction of viable identities and specific routes of political differentiation, helps to explain the rapid rise of political antisemitism without referring to simple political propaganda or inherent capacities of the revolting (Polish?) masses.

**Results of the Failed Revolution**

The events of 1905–1907, however dramatic, did not bring about any major changes in the political system or class structure. The revolution failed and was bloodily suppressed, leading to profound social disintegration and political repression. The elusive political compromises offered by the tsarist state, such as the “October manifesto,” with included moderate political liberties, a loosening of censorship, and several rounds of Duma elections, were canceled as soon as the tsarist
regime regained some vigor. Also, the “national question,” an additional dimension of struggle in Poland, remained unresolved, and the striving for autonomy was in vain. Emerging civic institutions, such as various associations or labor unions, were brutally suppressed during the “Stolypin reaction,” with extensive repressions and martial law sustained virtually till 1913 in the most agitated regions.

Nevertheless, the Revolution mobilized new groups of society, in particular, resubjectified workers, to actively participate in the public sphere. The events ushered the Polish Kingdom into modern politics. It was the point of ideological polarization and the shaping of Polish modern national identity. Unfortunately, the discursive configuration of this identity was heavily tainted with antisemitism, which remained in its very core for years to come. Indeed, it proved powerful enough to make Endecja a hegemonic power of the Polish public sphere for a number of years (even if not holding formal power), thus infecting the political discourse and Polish national identity with the vicious germ of antisemitism.

However, it is not true that it was the result of already antisemitic masses entering the political scene, and nor was it a consequence of the political mobilization of a people “unprepared” to participate because of sensitivity to vitriolic political emotions. Well-established lines of conservative critique directed against the mob or the masses in politics do not hold here. The analysis given above demonstrates how during the revolution a complex process of rendition and reshaping of political identities occurred. One of the main stakes of the political struggle was a discursive definition of the lines of antagonism. The result of this struggle was decisive for the future hegemony, that is to say, the struggle over which identities were to become dominant and what these identities would contain. In the context of early peripheral capitalism and painful exploitation reinforced by the fresh experience of semi-feudal secondary serfdom in the countryside, the construction of national unity as the main point of reference for peasant-workers was not an easy task.

In the other way around, the NZR is to some extent a clear indication of the impossibility of direct political representation of economic positions; proletarian demands cannot be automatically and “naturally” translated into socialist programs of this or that kind. A sharp illustration of the possibility for extraordinarily strong political mobilizations of the very same demands by different political forces is the scale of aforementioned national identification. Radicalizing differences culminated in so-called “fratricidal” struggles among workers, which grew along with the revolutionary cycle.

However, even the nationalist identities among the NZR members were still strongly embedded in the experience of production and class politics, constituting a particular form of factory nationalism. This prevented the NZR workers from fully endorsing the trans-class nationalist project of the National Democracy under its elitist leadership. Subsequently, this predicament also enhanced the need to secure integral national identity via reference to the logic of exclusion.
The Revolution was a moment of the “operationalization” of political ideologies. What had earlier been only imagined in the writings of party thinkers was now turned into political practice. The assumed political community could no longer be postponed or deferred, but had to be mobilized and disciplined in the here and now, without envisioning future reconciliation of tensions inside it. Thus, *Endecja* took a twist toward discipline and autocratic order. The democratizing aspect of the Revolution was supplemented by the disciplinary practice of political organizations, above all the ND and NZR. In order to reach both goals, a kind of logic of purification was involved and a strong enemy was necessary. What is more, it had to be an enemy with whom successful struggle was feasible, and graspable at hand. The tsarist state was evidently unsuitable for this task.

The price for the consolidation, which *Endecja* and NZR were rather eager to pay because of their already present ideological preferences, was the introduction of political antisemitism. Its political operation, as I demonstrated above, was above all providing a negatively evaluated Other. The construction of Polishness during this period was secured by the “othering” principle and the scapegoating effect. This necessity stems from a certain logic of discourse deciding that unification of every identity and stabilizing the social meaning needs a support of constitutive outside to freeze the relational play of significations. The power of antisemitism, once used, appeared to be significant. It was a political device strong enough to prevent longitudinal class mobilization, along with tsarist repressions to suppress the revolutionary upsurge and give the *Endecja* the dishonorable title of the force, which politically profited most from the Revolution.

This construction provided *Endecja* with a very strong position in Polish public discourse and the ability to define who is a Pole and what is Polishness. The hegemony of giving meanings to social life and shaping the assumed national community and identity appeared durable even after the demise of the explicit National Democratic ideological output. Considering a common concept of nation, Polish political vocabulary is still to large extent enslaved by the framework invented and mastered by the National Democracy. Polish nationalist discourse has evolved many times; however, its basic logic and even positions invested with exclusionary hostility are often the same. The othering of the Jews ossified in racialization of political difference and deeply ingrained antisemitism. It started to operate independently of explicit *Endecja*-led induction, becoming a common explanatory discourse outliving not only the *Endecja* but also the presence of Jewish populations in Polish territories.

**Acknowledgment**

This research was supported financially by the Polish National Science Center, research grant Preludium 3, 2012/05/N/HS3/01158, realized at the University of Łódź, Poland. I would like to hereby...
express my gratitude to Robert Blobaum, Satnam Virdee, Brendan McGeeVER, and Brian Porter-Szücs, as well as two anonymous reviewers, for insightful remarks on various stages of my work on this paper. All its imperfections—as always—remain my own responsibility.

Notes


12. Ibid., 216.

13. Ibid., 216–23.

14. Porter, When Nationalism Began to Hate, 158.

15. Ibid., 158–59.


17. On Polish reception of Spencer see Brian Porter, “The Social Nation and Its Futures: English Liberalism and Polish Nationalism in Late Nineteenth-Century Warsaw,” American Historical Review 101, no. 5 (1996): 1470–92; Wojciech Modzelewski, Naród i postęp: problematyka narodowa w ideologii i myśl społecznej pozytywistów warszawskich (Państwowe Wydawn. Naukowe, 1977). Gumplowicz was a prominent Polish sociologist of Jewish origin writing in German. His idea of race struggle as a spiritus movens of the social process, and antagonistic theory of state formation was easily integrated in a social Darwinist worldview and widely used to ground the organicist, antagonistic vision of nation, to a large
extent contrary to his initial intentions. On his writings on the Jewish question, see Philip Lenhard, “Assimilation Als Untergang. Ludwig Gumplowicz Judentum Und Die Frage Des Antisemitismus,” Zeitschrift Für Religions—Und Geistesgeschichte 64, no. 2 (2012): 105–16. On Polish reception of Spencer, see Porter, “The Social Nation and Its Futures: English Liberalism and Polish Nationalism in Late Nineteenth-Century Warsaw”; Modzelewski, Narod i postęp: problematyka narodowa w ideologii i myśli społecznej pozytywistów warszawskich; Gumplowicz was a prominent Polish sociologist of Jewish origin writing in German. His idea of race struggle as a spiritus movens of the social process and antagonistic theory of state formation was easily integrated in a social Darwinist worldview and widely used to ground the organicist, antagonistic vision of nation, to a large extent contrary to his initial intentions. On his writings on the Jewish question, see Lenhard, “Assimilation Als Untergang. Ludwig Gumplowicz Judentum Und Die Frage Des Antisemitismus.”

18. Dmowski was a leading National Democratic writer, ideologue, and politician; to learn about his intellectual peregrinations, see Fountain, Roman Dmowski, Party, Tactics, Ideology, 1895-1907; Grzegorz Krzywiec, Szowinizm po polsku. Przypadek Romana Dmowskiego (1886-1905) (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Neriton, Instytut Historii PAN, 2009).


20. Porter, When Nationalism Began to Hate, 236. Of course, I do not want to say that National Democracy was the only active factor here. For instance, the Polish Catholic Church had its own fair share in at least passive acceptance for political uses of antisemitism. However, in this article, I analyze a particular part of this complex conjuncture, focusing on massive political communication during the revolution, where National Democracy and its allied institutions were for sure a leading force.

21. The notion of a “feedback loop,” relevantly conveying the dynamics I describe, was suggested by one of the insightful, anonymous reviewers.


23. It is also worth noting that it is slightly misleading to rigidly differentiate between masses or the people and intelligentsia or elites and to associate with any of these groups any particular qualities (as ideological standpoints, tendencies to certain actions, or antisemitic predilections). One may observe that “the masses” were as diverse as the intelligentsia, and there is no prescribed unity among these groupings. It would be, however, on grounds of various theories of the masses or crowd psychologies, particularly constructing their object—the masses—along the lines of conservative fears (for some interesting remarks on this problem, see Stefan Jonsson, Crowds and Democracy: The Idea and Image of the Masses from Revolution to Fascism, Columbia Themes in Philosophy, Social Criticism, and the Arts (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013). However, despite awareness of this fact, fluent writing demands synecdochic representation; thus, occasionally, I also use such binary terms to refer to certain social strata.


28. These tensions were expressed before (as for instance during the famous demonstration in Grzybowski square, Warsaw, in fall 1904), and there were certainly reasons for dissatisfaction (letting alone general grievances of factory life, discontents of rapid modernization, class-based exploitation, and unresolved national question in Poland). However, one can point out economical crisis looming large and ongoing military conscription as direct factors further deteriorating living conditions and thus inducing popular dissatisfaction along the classical “theory of revolution” framework (James Davies, “Toward a
Theory of Revolution,” *American Sociological Review* 27, no. 1 [1962]; for more detailed analysis of these factors, see Blobaum, *Rewolucja*, chap. 2). However, such an outburst of revolt surprised almost everybody. Tsarist administration had not expected such deep undermining of autocracy, Polish nationalists were struck by lost control over urban masses (see Wiktor Marzec, “Modernizacja mas. Moment polityczny i dyskurs endecji w okresie rewolucji 1905-1907,” *Praktyka Teoretyczna*, no. 3 (2014). PPS socialists could not believe that Russian workers are capable for such massive protest, and even worse, that Polish workers “spontaneously” adjoined it, and SDKPiL activists were just astonished and unprepared (see, e.g., remarks of party activist Stanisław Pestkowski, *Wspomnienia rewolucjonisty* [Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1961], 32–33.


30. It is worth mentioning that shop-floor activism was much more infiltrated by the left wing of the PPS, so the disseminated agenda was even more consciously socialist and economically focused that a general picture of the PPS these days might have suggested. On earlier, already indicative, divisions concerning factory activism, see Jan Kancewicz, *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna w latach 1892-1896* (Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1984). On growing differences and ultimate split in the PPS, see Anna Żarnowska, *Geneza rozbioru w Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej*, 1904-1906 (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Naukowe, 1965). Because of this withdrawal of the significant part of the PPS from factory agitation, the general influence of the party on workers was initially severely limited. See Laura Crago, “The ‘Polishness’ of Production: Factory Politics and the Reinvention of Working-Class National and Political Identities in Russian Poland’s Textile Industry, 1880-1910,” *Slavic Review* 59, no. 1 (2000): 16–41.


33. Later autobiographical narratives are much conventionalized in this respect, which indicates possible retroactive reshaping of conscious political agenda along the lines of party ideological principles acquired by the narrators later (explicit delegitimization of “tsarist autocracy” was the main theme of almost all leaflets from the first half of 1905). However, this does not deny existence of such convictions.

34. However, “bourgeois” was a very heterogeneous group, and its ethnic composition for sure played important role in its action and resulting perceptions. In this reconfiguration, it was defined rather economically, not being infused with national/ethnic meanings. It was certainly important that German or Jewish entrepreneurs (not necessarily sharing anti-Russian attitudes held among the Polish elites) found it easier to cooperate with the tsarist administration in antilabor policies, using military squads in factories not excluded. It was easier to classify them as a part of the regime of exploitation along the tsarat. Thus, the ethnic component was active rather more negatively (*not* providing a national or ethnic solidarity in practice and perceptions) than it was played out as a possibly antisemitic undertone of class-based discourses. For an intersection of class and national politics (which for a long time was rather anti-German than anti-Jewish!), see Crago, “The ‘Polishness’ of Production: Factory Politics and the Reinvention of Working-Class National and Political Identities in Russian Poland’s Textile Industry, 1880-1910.”

35. By the end of 1906, three main socialist parties boasted memberships that were as large as 5,5000 (PPS), 3,5000 (SDKPiL), and 3,0000 (Bund), which in total amounted to some 15 percent of all workers in the Polish Kingdom. In contrast, prior to the Revolution, all three parties had no more than 1,500 members. NZR has reached about 25,000 members.


37. A collection of tsarist administrative reports giving a detailed overview of the contentious worker’s politics without antisemitic additions, and even confirming actually existing solidarity of workers with different ethnic and religious backgrounds, could be found in Korzec, ed., *Źródła do dziejów
revolucji 1905-1907 w okręgu łódzkim, tom 1, cz. 1; Paweł Korzec, ed., Źródła do dziejów revolucji 1905-1907 w okręgu łódzkim, tom 1, cz. 2 (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1958); Stanisław Kalabiński, ed., Carat i klasy posiadające w walce z rewolucją 1905-1907 w Królestwie Polskim: materiały archiwalne, Źródła do dziejów revolucji 1905-1907 na ziemiach polskich (Państwowe Wydawn: Naukowe, 1956). There is no reason to suspect tsarist administration attempted to hide antisemitic undertones, as it was rather interested in inducing ethnic and religious antagonisms. The fact that they quite explicitly deny this, claiming openly that Jewish and Polish workers participated solidly in manifestations, backs up the statement even if primary sources could have been reprinted selectively by the editors. It also worth mentioning that a direct impulse for the June uprising in Łódź in 1905 was a massacre of a peaceful demonstration of workers. This gathering was organized because of the gossip about two killed Jewish workers buried secretly in order to avoid the public (and possibly contentious) funeral (Stanisław Kalabiński and Feliks Tych, Czwarte powstanie czy pierwsza rewolucja. Lata 1905-1907 na ziemiach polskich [Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1976]; Witold Marzec and Kamil Piskała, eds., Rewolucja 1905: Przewodnik [Warsaw: Wydawnictwo “Krytyki Politycznej,” 2013]). Apparently, gossips about the Jews could also play a role rather different from what we are used to in the research on pogroms in the region.


42. There is a painful scarcity of original proletarian discourse produced on the spot. Autobiographical materials written later could be of some use; however, they were produced by a particular group of workers and were subjected to a retrospective reconstruction of the biography of the narrators in particular contexts of writing. What we can infer from those writings is that ant-semitic attitudes had not become a part of their public selves in the forthcoming years. The archival sources are much more abundant. For printed collections and biographies, see, e.g., Zdzislaw Spieralski, ed., Wspomnienia Weteranów Rewolucji 1905 i 1917 Roku., 1967; Marian Płochocki, Wspomnienia działacza SDKPiL (Warsaw: Iskry, 1956); Lucjan Rudnicki, Stare i nowe (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1979); Pestkowski, Wspomnienia rewolucjonisty, and the PPS journal Niepodległość from the interwar period.

43. For performative dimension of language in intellectual history (by extension also popular intellectual history), see Quentin Skinner, Visions of Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). About the original theory of performatives, see John L. Austin, How to Do Things with Words (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975).


45. Leaflet of Peasant Department of the PPS, 1 November 1905, APL PGŻŻ, 12/1905/II p.1204–5; see also: Łódź Committee of the PPS, 24 December 1905, APL Gubernator Piotrowski 1553, p. 3.

46. The role of the tsarist secret services or even police and military in pogroms during the revolution was later confirmed, especially concerning the “closest” events in Białystok and Siedlice in 1906; see Paweł Korzec, “Pogrom białostocki i jego polityczne repercusje,” Rocznik Białostocki III (1962): 149–82; Szymon Rudnicki, “Pogrom Siedlecki,” Kwartalnik Historii Żydów, no. 1 (2010): 18–39; Michał Kurkiewicz and Monika Płutecka, “Rosyjskie pogromy w Białymstoku i Siedlcach w 1906 roku,” Biuletyn Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej, no. 11 (2010): 20–24. For a broader context of these times and a variegated genesis of other pogroms, see Shlomo Lombroza, “The Pogroms of 1903-1906,” in Klier and Lambroza, Pogroms.


50. Again, I am grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers who brought this issue to light.


54. Crago, “The ‘Polishness’ of Production: Factory Politics and the Reinvention of Working-Class National and Political Identities in Russian Poland’s Textile Industry, 1880-1910.” General discursive framing of Polishness for a long time (till about the turn of the centuries) was rather anti-German, which testify for example local newspapers, especially concerning the city of Łódź being under constant threat of being perceived as not Polish, but foreign, German, even it were the Jews who constituted up to one-third of its population; see Kamil Śmiechowski, *Z perspektywy stolicy: Łódź okiem warszawskich tygodników społeczno-kulturalnych (1881-1905)*, Wyd. 1 (Łódź: Wydawn. Naukowe “Ibidem,” 2012).

55. As the classical Stalinist historiography would have it, see Stanisław Kalabiński, *Antynarodowa polityka endecji w rewolucji 1905-1907* (Państwowe Wydawn. Naukowe, 1955). In Łódź, NZR used to have extensive support. The local proletariat was composed of recent newcomers from poor village settlements with strong traditional values and religious beliefs. In the late nineteenth century, only 10 to 15 percent of inhabitants were born in Łódź; see Anna Żarnowska, *Klasa robotnicza Królestwa Polskiego, 1870-1914* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Naukowe, 1974); Monasterska, *Narodowy Związek Robotniczy, 1905-1920*, 27. However, National Democratic thinking was heavily tainted by conscious obscurantism aiming at ruling over the masses, increasingly seen as a savage mob to be tempered urgently, see Marzec, “Modernizacja mas. Moment polityczny i dyskurs endecji w okresie rewolucji 1905-1907.”


59. Positivism as an intellectual movement in Polish context used to have particular features. Although referring to the Comtean positive philosophy, it was more a sociocultural program following the suppression of the 1863 January Uprising. Instead of inducing insurrectionist tendencies, positivists called for “organic work,” bringing mundane civilizational progress through progressive and liberal measures in culture and economy; as a means of contesting partitions and lack of nation state, see “Positivism,” in Czesław Miłosz, *The History of Polish Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); Maciej Janowski, *Polish Liberal Thought up to 1918* (Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2004); Andrzej Jaszczuk, *Spór pozytywistów z konserwatystami o przyszłość Polski 1870-1903* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1986).

60. This converged with a shift in Dmowski’s position when he started to perceive Russian empire as a lesser danger and the actor with whom he could tactically cooperate.


62. Leaflet of the Central Committee of the National Ligue, 1 August 1905, APL PGŻŻ 12/1905/II, pp. 918–19; see also the leaflet of Łódź Department of the NZR, 27 December 1905, APL GP 1553, p. 6; National-Democratic Craftsmen and Workers Youth, APL PGŻŻ 12/1905/1, p. 119.

64. Endeks took the baton from declining, incapable of facing modern challenges and appealing to broader audiences, old type, elitist conservatists (see Bogumił Grott, Zygmunt Balicki: ideolog Narodowej Demokracji, Wyd. 1 (Kraków: Arcana, 1995), 30; Jaszczuk, Spór pozytywistów z konserwatystami o przyszłość Polski 1870-1903, 286. This shift did not remain vain. Social milieus previously rather hostile, or at least indifferent, to National Democracy began to actively support and enter the party: during the Revolution, for instance, the involvement of Polish landed gentry in the party institutions grew, see Roman Wapiński, Roman Dmowski (Lublin: Wydawn. Lubelskie, 1989), 157. This also opened the door for an alliance with the Polish Catholic Church, equally interested in preserving existing social order, and equally not so opposed to antisemitism. See Robert Blobaum, “The Revolution of 1905-1907 and the Crisis of Polish Catholicism,” Slavic Review 47, no. 4 (1988): 667–86; Ilona Zaleska, Kościół a Narodowa Demokracja w Królestwie Polskim do wybuchu I wojny światowej, Wyd. 1 (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo “DiG,” 2014).


68. Korzec, ed., Źródła do dziejów rewolucji 1905-1907 w Okręgu Łódzkim, Tom 1, Cz. 2, 1958, 351.

69. For racialization of liberals during later Duma elections, see Ury, Barricades and Banners, 193; 235–37.

70. Leaflet of the Central Committee of the NZR, 1 June 1905, APL GP, 390, pp. 382–83.

71. Ibid.


73. Piotr Stolypin was a Russian prime minister and home secretary between 1906 and 1911. He was the main tsarist politician responsible for suppression of the revolution and accompanying harsh represions. On Stolypin reaction in Russian Poland, see the last chapter of Blobaum, Rewolucja.

74. It is also worth adding that a focus on the discursive rendition of Polishness during the heated years of 1905–1907 does not necessarily imply that theories pointing to imagined communities and invented traditions have the last word on the constructed nature of nation. See, e.g., Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2006); E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger, The Invention of Tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Moreover, the same applies to approaches pointing at the purely modern genesis of nation: Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008). Even if Polishness had its premodern, inter-class existence in the late medieval ages (see, e.g., Andrzej Walicki, “Intellectual Elites and the Vicissitudes of ‘Imagined Nation’ in Poland,” East European Politics & Societies 11, no. 2 (March 1, 1997): 227–53), in the early twentieth-century workers in the Kingdom of Poland, being the first generation freed by the Russian Tsar from secondary serfdom exe-
cuted by the Polish nobles, claiming to carry the essence of Polishness, had few reasons to see themselves as a community with their former and present oppressors in the name of national prosperity. Thus, the coherent nation had to be one more time invented, constructed, and imagined.

75. Despite these efforts, the tension ultimately led to a split between ND and NZR. It is a widely held, and not untrue, conviction that the main reason was the growing pro-Russian and reconciliatory position of Endecja in subsequent Dumas (Monasterska, *Narodowy Związek Robotniczy*, 1905-1920, 67–80.) If so, this would confirm the ultimate success of nationalist mobilization among workers, which proved to be stronger than convictions of the (elite) Endeks themselves. Although they initially stimulated it, they later engaged in political maneuvers unacceptable for their ardent supporters among workers. However, there is also another explanation: workers unwilling to accept growing social conservatism and elitist hegemony. Indeed, factory nationalism was not an artificial project made up from scratch by National Democracy, and the intellectual milieu of NZR workers and their aspirations were resistant to full submission to Endeks demanding trans-class loyalty against class-based interests. Their imagined future nation, state, and professional life were still class-based, and their claims strictly referred to class context of production (Crago, “The ‘Polishness’ of Production: Factory Politics and the Reinvention of Working-Class National and Political Identities in Russian Poland’s Textile Industry, 1880-1910,” 36–41.) This explanation, in turn, may suggest that even among already nationally inclined workers, constructing the integral national identity was a challenge and still demanded support of logics of exclusion documented in this paper.

76. Pointed at, for instance, in *Społeczeństwo i polityka*; Blobaum, *Rewolucja*.


82. Joanna B. Michlic, *Poland’s Threatening Other: The Image of the Jew from 1880 to the Present* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

**Wiktor Marzec** is a sociologist and philosopher. His research interests concern intellectual emancipation, political mobilization, ideological languages and conceptual innovation in early 20th century Russian Poland, constituting the emergence of the political modernity. His recent publications include articles in *Thesis Eleven* and *Journal of Historical Sociology*. Currently he is pursuing a doctoral degree in sociology in Department of Sociology and Anthropology in the Central European University, Budapest.