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Democracy and Discipline in Late Nineteenth-Century Poland*

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The only salvation for us is to stop being an incoherent, loose mob
and to change into a strongly organized, disciplined army.
(ROMAN DMOWSKI, 1903)¹

During the late nineteenth century (so the story goes) Poland entered the modern world. As this happened, an appropriately modern form of nationalism emerged, one that allowed all Poles to identify with “their” nation. The old forms of elite political culture became irrelevant as various mass movements burst onto the public stage and the vectors of power shifted toward “the people.” Now workers and peasants would be players in the political game, and the domination of the nobility and the intelligentsia would come to an end. According to the historian Anna Żarnowska, this all culminated in the 1905 Revolution: “The most essential element introduced by the Revolution to the political culture of society in the Polish Kingdom was the democratization of political life, a dramatic expansion of the circle of people not only hungry for political knowledge but also actively involved in political life. [The Revolution also brought about] the active inclusion of the ‘common man,’ not only in collective political protest but also in the creation of institutions and political organizations.”² On one level this narrative of democratization is indisputable.

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¹ [Roman Dmowski], “Walka o prawo i organizacja narodowa,” *Przegląd Wszechpolski*, vol. 9 (June 1903), in *Dziesięć lat walki (zbiór prac i artykułów publikowanych do 1905 roku)*, by Roman Dmowski, vol. 3 of *Pisma*, 10 vols. (Częstochowa, 1938), pp. 342–43. Translations from the Polish are mine unless otherwise indicated.

² Anna Żarnowska, “Rewolucja 1905–1907 a kultura polityczna społeczeństwa Królestwa Polskiego,” in *Spoleczeństwo i polityka: Dorastanie do demokracji. Kultura polityczna w Królestwie Polskim na początku XX wieku*, ed. Anna Żarnowska and Ta-

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Political culture was indeed becoming more inclusive and participatory as the Revolution of 1905 approached, and mass politics did explode onto the scene during that momentous year. But these developments were accompanied by a transformation in political rhetoric—not in the direction of popular empowerment, as is so often implied, but toward the ordering and disciplining of these newly mobilized “masses.” At the center of this process stood the concept of the nation, which many intellectuals struggled to transform so that it could sustain, rather than subvert, hierarchy and organization. If we are to understand the rise of mass politics in Russian-occupied Poland, we must grasp a fundamental paradox: just as the national movement was expanding from a narrow conspiracy into a broadly based political force, the rhetoric of nationalism was growing ever more authoritarian.

Most scholars agree that the decades leading up to the First World War were marked by the rise of mass politics—not just in Poland but throughout Europe. As Stephen Kern has put it, between 1880 and 1914 there occurred “a general cultural reorientation . . . that was essentially pluralistic and democratic.”³ Literacy had become pervasive enough to support a popular press, and mass-circulation dailies were appearing even in peripheral cities like Warsaw. “The people” were becoming involved in political life all over the continent, whether or not electoral institutions existed within which they could legally express themselves. In this environment, neither parliamentary politics in Western Europe nor opposition politics in the Russian Empire could remain the exclusive domain of educated elites. Robert Blobaum has insightfully argued that the truly revolutionary aspect of 1905 was not so much the way it changed the governing institutions of the tsarist state but the way it exemplified and helped bring about the profound transformation, even “democratization,” of political culture.⁴ But nearly all revolutions are followed by counterrevolutions, and in

deusz Wolsza (Warsaw, 1993), p. 1. The “Polish Kingdom” was the name of the region that included the cities of Warsaw, Łódź, and Lublin. The expression comes from the 1815 Vienna settlement, which promised limited Polish autonomy, with the Russian Tsar serving as king of Poland. All remnants of that legal arrangement had long since been discarded, but the name retained its place in popular usage. This article will focus almost exclusively on Russian-occupied Poland for two reasons. First, the overwhelming majority of Poles lived in these territories—the partitions did not leave the country split into three equal parts but gave Russia the lion’s share. Second, the conditions for the Poles in Germany, Austria, and Russia were so profoundly different as to make generalizations hazardous. Despite the efforts of Polish nationalists to imagine a unified “all-Poland” movement, we must take care not to make sweeping statements about “Poland” in the nineteenth century. There are (at least) three distinct Polish histories of the partition era, and in this article I will only be dealing with one of them.

³ Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880–1918* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 152.

⁴ Robert E. Blobaum, *Rewolucja: Russian Poland, 1904–1907* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1995), p. 189.

this case new forms of discipline—new ways of organizing the masses—were arising from within the very forces that were working to “democratize” the public sphere. If modernity, in the political sense, is characterized by the increased participation of the masses in the determination of public policy and in the conduct of partisan conflict, then the modern world carries within itself its own negation.

In this article I offer an example of how authority, modernity, and democratic rhetoric were inextricably intertwined in turn-of-the-century politics. Like Anthony Giddens, I want to explore how “totalitarian possibilities are contained within the institutional parameters of modernity rather than being foreclosed by them.”⁵ The modernization of political culture may have created a more “pluralistic and democratic” world, but it also facilitated the construction of new styles of authority. In recent years scholars from many disciplines have demonstrated how the narratives of modernity impose silences that conceal the workings of power in the age of democracy. As Foucault so famously put it, the “democratization of sovereignty was fundamentally determined by and grounded in mechanisms of disciplinary coercion.”⁶ It was not mere cynicism that caused Polish intellectuals to turn “to the people” in the 1880s, nor were those who moved to the right in the 1890s abandoning their youthful ideals. The rhetoric of democracy contained ample spaces for the exertion of authority, for the “colonization” of “the people” by the intelligentsia (to borrow an expression from Katherine Verdery).⁷ This essay, then, will explore the troublesome bond between popular politics and power, casting the former as an aspect of the latter, rather than as a challenge to it.

As Partha Chatterjee and Florencia Mallon have argued in different contexts, modern national movements generally begin with evocations of popular action, only to be subsumed later within what Chatterjee calls “a discourse of order.”⁸ Certainly this is what occurred in Europe, as the revolutionary nationalisms so common before 1848 developed into the radical-right nationalisms of the early twentieth century. Diversity and plurality (once so easily conceived of and spoken about within a nationalist framework) were silenced, and new

⁵ Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford, Calif., 1990), p. 8.

⁶ Michel Foucault, “Two Lectures,” in *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, ed. Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner (Princeton, N.J., 1994), p. 219.

⁷ Katherine Verdery, “The Production and Defense of ‘the Romanian Nation,’” in *Nationalist Ideologies and the Production of National Cultures*, ed. Richard G. Fox (Washington, D.C., 1990), p. 96, and *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu’s Romania* (Berkeley, 1991), p. 57.

⁸ Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (Minneapolis, 1986), p. 51; Florencia E. Mallon, *Peasant and Nation: The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru* (Berkeley, 1995), p. 19.

narratives of the national past, present, and future were constructed to make sense of, and give shape to, the disruptive social changes of the modern world. In this article I explore the initial formulation of these new histories and sociologies of the nation in Russian-occupied Poland, in order to show how and why the idea of the nation lost its tight conceptual bond with terms like “freedom” and “revolution” and came to be paired instead with words like “obedience” and “discipline.” Historians all too often remain trapped within those “discourses of order” that emerged in the nineteenth century and are thus blinded to the ways in which peasants, workers, women, ethnic minorities, and others resisted, constituted, amplified, and modified the intelligentsia’s national imaginings, as well as to the techniques deployed by elites to restrain and domesticate such variety. The recovery of the voices lost within the totalizing narratives of modernization and nationalization is one of the most challenging tasks facing historians today, but before we can even begin to identify and listen to those voices, we must first understand the mechanisms by which they were silenced.⁹ This essay will do so by examining the ways in which power and discipline penetrated the rhetoric of nationalism in the late nineteenth century, eroding what had once been a revolutionary ideology and transforming it into a vehicle for order and authority.

As late as the 1890s, the rhetoric of the Polish intelligentsia in the Russian Empire seemed surprisingly open to the possibility that the subaltern might indeed speak. In a typical comment that would be echoed across the political spectrum, one student activist recalled that he and his colleagues longed for an ideology that could “flow from [the peasants’] feelings and instincts.”¹⁰ Unfortunately, it would prove difficult to realize this ideal. Polish socialists would create wide spaces for democratic rhetoric, but to sustain their eschatology of revolution they had to make the *lud* (the people) fit into an established narrative of progress.¹¹ The flesh-and-blood workers and peasants did not always cooperate, and when they did not, some socialists began discussing the need for “class discipline.” Even more seriously, “patriotic” intellectuals, though ini-

⁹ For a general discussion of how “subalterns” are silenced, and how one might go about recovering their voices, see the 1994 forum on this topic in the *American Historical Review*: Gyan Prakash, “Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism”; Florencia E. Mallon, “The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History”; and Frederick Cooper, “Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial African History,” *American Historical Review* 99 (December 1994): 1475–1545.

¹⁰ Paweł Czarnecki, *Młody Kasprowicz a grupa warszawskiego “Głosu”* (Poznań, 1935), p. 9.

¹¹ The term *lud* can be roughly translated into English as “the common people.” The word is deeply embedded in a variety of competing discursive frameworks, none of which have precise parallels in the anglophone world. No simple translation or definition can, therefore, be offered, but throughout this essay I will illustrate some of the many ways in which the term was used in the late nineteenth century.

tially linked to the socialists by a parallel revolutionary tradition, came to see all diversity and dissent as a threat to “national unity.” Both groups (the immediate ancestors of the twentieth-century socialist left and nationalist right) emerged from the same community of radical opposition to the sociopolitical system of the Russian Empire, and both eventually reconfigured their rhetoric so as to create spaces for authority within the discourse of democracy. But there was a crucial difference: whereas the socialists imagined discipline within a historiosophical narrative, the nationalists sought to construct social cohesion in the present. As we will see, this allowed the socialists to accept disorder even as they dreamed of order in the future, while forcing nationalists, ultimately, to abandon even the slogans of social justice in their quest for unity. Nationalist intellectuals moved away from the revolutionary tradition toward a militarized, hierarchical, authoritarian image of the nation because, by the turn of the century, they found it impossible to believe in the promise of dynamic historical time.

Lud AND *Naród*

The historian Bohdan Cywiński has labeled the young intelligentsia of the 1880s in Russian-occupied Poland “the generation of the *niepokorni*,” a term we can loosely translate as “the defiant ones.”¹² They were driven (in the words of a contemporary handbill) by the “spirit of protest against everything vile,” and regardless of their disagreements they shared the belief that through an act of will they could “push the earth into a new orbit” (as one of them wrote at the time).¹³ Moreover, they believed that such subversion had to be aimed simultaneously in two directions: against the “foreign” oppressors in Petersburg and against the “social” oppressors in the manor houses and factory offices. To put this differently, they juxtaposed the parallel vocabularies of “community” and “revolution,” so that “we” were both the Poles and the exploited, and “they” were both the Russians and the “propertied classes.” As long as this idea of dual revolution united the *niepokorni*, arguments over “nationalism” and “internationalism,” “patriotism” and “socialism,” could not weaken their united front. The novelist Stefan Żeromski described the politically active students at Warsaw University in the 1880s as “an agglomeration of the most contradictory elements, as obstinately contradictory as you can only imagine,” but he also recognized that all these “elements” thought of themselves as a

¹² Bohdan Cywiński, *Rodowody niepokornych* (Warsaw, 1971).

¹³ Untitled brochure, Warsaw, March 1891 (Archiwum PAN w Krakowie [The Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Kraków], Teka Zielińskiego, sygn. 7783, no. 2); Entuzjasta, “Polemika,” *Kurjer Warszawski* 67 (April 1/13, 1887): 2. All dates in Polish periodicals from the Russian partition were given in both the European and Russian forms, and I will follow that practice in my citations.

single revolutionary force and were seen by tsarist officials and conservative Poles as such.¹⁴ The socialist Feliks Perl described “a sense of unity,” supported by “an almost religious faith that a social revolution, a universal social transformation would at once solve all problems, remove in one blow all exploitation and all oppression.”¹⁵ A student at Warsaw University in 1890 named Stanisław Koszutski recalled that in those days all the students were “populist-democratic, socialist, free-thinking, or progressive,” with only trivial differences between “national-socialists” and “international-socialists.” Everyone Koszutski knew was committed to “the emancipation of the people,” and no one challenged the assumption that there was a link between social revolution and national emancipation.¹⁶

Ultimately the *niepokorni* would split into the competing ideological camps of the twentieth century, but the “patriots” and the “socialists” (as they liked to characterize themselves) were not, contrary to most accounts, driven apart by a dispute between the rival concepts of “nation” and “class.” Both these terms had contested meanings, and both remained central to the rhetoric of all the *niepokorni*. Nearly all of them placed “Poland” at the center of their worldview, and nearly all professed concern for “the social question.” In fact, the driving imperative of virtually every young Polish writer and political activist in the Russian Empire in the 1880s and 1890s was to conceptualize the linkage between *naród* (nation) and *lud* (the people) in a way that would sustain a commitment to both ideas. With time, however, the patriots and the socialists would come up with dramatically different resolutions to this problem. At the heart of their dispute was a disagreement about the positioning of human communities in historical time. For those who would eventually constitute the Polish Socialist Party, the bond between social revolution and national independence would be sustained by accepting that the nation was internally divided by antagonistic classes, while insisting that, in time (after the revolution), the proletariat would co-opt and embody the nation, inaugurating an era of both social justice and social cohesion. Conflict within Poland could be accepted in the present because national unity was promised by a vision of the future. In contrast, for the so-called patriots (the emerging nationalist right),

¹⁴ Stefan Żeromski, *Dzienniki (wybór)*, ed. Jerzy Kadziela (Wrocław, 1980), pp. 367–68. See also the broad strokes with which Erazm Piltz characterized “the youth” in *Nasza młodzież*, 2d ed. (Kraków, 1903), and *Nasze stronnictwa skrajne* (Kraków, 1903).

¹⁵ Res [Feliks Perl], *Dzieje ruchu socjalistycznego w zaborze rosyjskim* (Warsaw, 1910), p. 81. See also Ludwik Krzywicki, *Wspomnienia*, 3 vols. (Warsaw, 1947–59), 1:164, 2:134–35.

¹⁶ Stanisław Koszutski, *Walka młodzieży polskiej o wielkie ideały. Wspomnienia z czasów gimnazjalnych i uniwersyteckich: Siedlce, Kielce, Warszawa, Kijów, Berlin, Paryż (1881–1900)* (Warsaw, 1928), pp. 22–23, 44–46. See also Roman Wapiński, “Pokolenia Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej,” *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 3 (1983): 486–87.

the *lud* and the *naród* were defined in terms of social space rather than historical time. That is, they understood “Poland” to be a human community existing in the present, rather than a player in a teleological drama. The only way to talk about “the people,” in this case, was to presume, and eventually demand, that the peasants and workers identify with “their” nation and subordinate their “particularistic” demands to the “common good.”

In 1886 a group of young intellectuals in Warsaw founded a new magazine called *Głos* (The voice), which was designed to serve as an eclectic organ for a new generation. A member of the editorial board, Józef Hłasko, called *Głos* “the laboratory of new thinking in Poland. . . . Among the authors who began their careers in the period from 1887–1894 in Warsaw, there were hardly any who did not write for *Głos*, or were not on its editorial board.”¹⁷ Hłasko was not exaggerating: *Głos* was indeed the “voice” of the *niepokorni*, encompassing a wide range of ideological positions and including nearly every young intellectual of the day.¹⁸ In its first issue, *Głos* declared that its “leading principle” and “guiding idea” would be “the subordination of the interests of all the separate strata [of society] to the interests of the people [*lud*].”¹⁹ Central to this agenda was a conception of the nation as a collectivity marked by internal division—some even called it “class struggle”—between an oppressed majority and a privileged elite. The *lud*, for the writers at *Głos*, was a definable social category consisting of peasants and workers, existing within (but not yet subsuming) the nation. In the paper’s prospectus the language was clearer: the editors promised to “recognize the *lud* as the main component of national society.” Here the nation was imagined as both a divided community and (for now) a

¹⁷ Józef Hłasko, “W redakcji ‘Głosu’ (Wspomnienia z lat 1887–1895),” *Gazeta Warszawska* 265–92 (September 1–23, 1932): 5.

¹⁸ On *Głos* and its importance to the fin de siècle Polish intelligentsia, see Zenon Kmiecik, “Prasa polska w Królestwie Polskim i Imperium Rosyjskim w latach 1865–1904,” in *Prasa polska w latach 1864–1918*, ed. Jerzy Łojek (Warsaw, 1976), pp. 40–43, *Prasa warszawska w latach 1886–1904* (Wrocław, 1989), pp. 68–83, “Oblicze społeczno-polityczne ‘Głosu’ (1886–1899),” *Przegląd Humanistyczny* 10–12 (1981): 39–51; Krzywicki 3:37–111; Stanisław Kozicki, *Historia Ligi Narodowej (okres 1887–1907)* (London, 1964), pp. 24–32; [Perl], pp. 225–32; Lorraine F. E. Toporowski, “The Origins of the National Democratic Party, 1886–1903: A Study in Polish Nationalism” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1973), pp. 151–94; Roman Zimand, *Dekadentyzm warszawski* (Warsaw, 1964), p. 19; Janina Żurawicka, “‘Głos’ wobec kwestii robotniczej (1886–1900),” in *Studia z dziejów myśli społecznej i kwestii robotniczej w XIX wieku*, ed. Marian Żychowski (Warsaw, 1964), “Lud w ideologii ‘Głosu’ (1886–1894),” *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 4–5 (1956): 316–40, and “Zespół redakcji ‘Głosu’ (1886–1894),” *Rocznik Historii Czasopiśmiennictwa Polskiego* 1 (1962): 155–83. On the importance of *Głos* to Polish students in Russian universities, see Zygmunt Wasilewski, “Życiorys, 1865–1939” (Archiwum Polskiej Akademii Nauk [Archive of the Polish Academy of Sciences], Warsaw, sygn. 127), pp. 43, 47–48.

¹⁹ Redakcyja, “Nowe pismo,” *Głos* 1 (September 20/October 2, 1886): 1.

site for exploitation, while the *lud* was understood to consist of that “component” within the nation that was oppressed and poor.²⁰ The writers at *Głos* were not necessarily Marxists (though some of them were), but they did employ a rhetoric of class struggle, and they did see the nation as a zone of conflict, not as a harmonious social organism. Their goal was to change this, to place the nation at the service of the *lud* and “subordinate” the old elites.

For the “patriot” and the “socialist” alike, then, Poland was an internally divided space, filled with social struggle. One of *Głos*’s editors, Jan Ludwik Popławski, was adamant in his rejection of “those organizations of the working class that . . . cross the boundaries of state and national differences,” but even he insisted that “artificial, superficial harmony always designates the domination of one class.”²¹ This image of “domination” within the nation was the opening that allowed people like Ludwik Krzywicki (a leading socialist thinker and the translator of Marx’s *Capital*) to contribute regularly to *Głos*.²² The paper’s prospectus of 1886 contrasted the “real interests of the *lud*” with an older national agenda rooted in the interests of the nobility and announced that *Głos* would “decisively condemn” anyone who tried to “step forward in the name of our thousand-year culture and tradition” and co-opt or domesticate popular unrest. Those traditions, the prospectus claimed, were “foreign to the

²⁰ Władysław Kiersz, *Prospekt Głosu* (n.p., n.d.), p. 1. Kiersz was the publisher of *Głos* and thus had to sign the prospectus, but he did not in fact write anything for the paper. Within a year he was forced to flee Warsaw after a financial scandal, and the editorial board, led by Józef Potocki and Jan Ludwik Popławski, took over the paper. It seems that women were also included by *Głos* within the category of the disempowered and oppressed. See Walerya Marrané in *Prospekt Głosu*, p. 5; J. L. P., “Wolne związki,” *Głos* 3 (February 6/18, 1888): 75–76; Kobieta z Obrzydłówka, “Młodzież inteligentna na prowincyi,” *Głos* 4 (October 5/17, 1891): 502; “Z pamiętnika kobiety,” *Głos* 4 (November 9/21, 1891): 556–57; Maryjampolanka, “Jeszcze o kobiecie inteligentnej na prowincyi,” *Głos* 7 (February 8/20, 1892): 92; J. K. Potocki, “Ginekologia i socjologia,” *Głos* 9 (January 29/February 10, 1894): 62–63; M. Goldberg, “Zasady praktyczne etyki,” *Głos* 9 (January 29/February 10, 1894): 64–65. In all the publications cited in this article, pseudonyms and cryptic abbreviations were common, and many pieces were simply left unsigned. I have preserved the original signatures in these notes.

²¹ J. L. P., “Otwarte karty,” *Głos* 1 (December 27/January 8, 1886–87): 17–18.

²² Krzywicki was a close personal friend of the editors of *Głos*. See Krzywicki 2:43. Krzywicki was not the only socialist to write for *Głos*: Edward Przewoski also contributed to the paper, and Zygmunt Heryng wrote articles favorably comparing Marx with the classical liberal economists. Edward Przewoski, “Nasi prawnicy i ekonomiści,” *Głos* 3 (January 15/27, 1888): 41–42; Z. Heryng, “Notatki ekonomiczne: Kierunki i metody badań,” *Głos* 3 (January 30/February 11–February 6/8, 1888): 63–64; 73–75. See also the anonymous Marxist essay, “Z ruchu klasy robotniczej w Europie,” *Głos* 3 (September 17/29, 1888): 458–60. For the most extensive exposition of Marxism on the pages of *Głos*, see the long series by Karl Kautsky, “Przeciwnictwa klasowe w roku 1789: Z powodu setnej rocznicy Wielkiej Rewolucyi,” *Głos* 4 (July 29/August 10–September 16/28, 1889).

majority of the nation,” which had “its own religion, its own morality, its own politics, and its own science; in a word, its own culture, the constituent elements of which cannot be considered a lower form of development.” Coining an expression that would become a cliché for the fin de siècle left, the prospectus argued that there were “two civilizations” within each nation of Europe, the “privileged” and the “popular” (*ludowa*).²³ A few weeks later, responding to some letters complaining about this position, the editors of *Głos* wrote,

The Polish peasant has preserved only one memory of the past: the memory of the wrongs done to him over the course of many centuries. All other traditions remain alien to him, because he did not take part in that life of which they are a monument. . . . The forms of our historical culture, precisely because they were the creation of one caste, glorify privilege. They do not correspond at all to the demands of real social development. We call the nation not that small cluster of heirs of the past . . . but that million-strong mass of peasants, the collective consciousness of which does not require legitimization from the crests of sacred memory.²⁴

The editors made no effort to smooth over the gap between rich and poor in the name of national unity because, they believed, “the harmonic reconciliation of two such contradictory directions of thought is an unimaginable absurdity. The only possible relationship here must be *subordinating* one of these demands to the other.”²⁵ Or, as Józef Potocki (another of *Głos*’s editors) put it in 1887, “It is pointless to talk about the most general goals, about common aspirations: such goals and aspirations in this case do not exist. *The normal existence* of a society and its successful development, which is mentioned so often, can only be a common goal as long as it remains a lump of phrases, form without content. . . . That which would be desirable for the noble stratum would be frightful for the *lud*.”²⁶

All this was familiar to the radical intellectuals of the Russian Empire in the 1880s—Russian and Polish alike. Indeed, the populism of *Głos* was explicitly linked to a wider revolutionary movement that had been challenging the tsarist state for more than two decades. Underground revolutionary groups had been providing models of illegal action since the early 1860s, and throughout the 1870s the gendarmes had to contend regularly with student demonstrations, radical agitation in the countryside, and even political assassinations. The

²³ *Prospekt Głosu*, p. 1. See also Redakcja, “Pańskie i chłopskie: Potrzeby umysłowe, cz. II,” *Głos* 1 (November 1/13, 1886): 97–98; [Jan Ludwik Popławski], “Dwie cywilizacje,” *Głos* 1 (November 1/13, 1886) in Jan Ludwik Popławski, *Pisma polityczne*, 2 vols., ed. Zygmunt Wasilewski (Kraków and Warsaw, 1910), 1:133–40.

²⁴ Redakcja, “Pierwsze żądło,” *Głos* 1 (September 27/October 9, 1886): 18.

²⁵ Redakcja, “Pańskie i chłopskie: Potrzeby umysłowe, cz. III,” *Głos* 1 (November 15/27, 1886): 129.

²⁶ J. K. Potocki, “Inteligencyja wiejska I,” *Głos* 2 (October 17/29, 1887): 657.

young Russian revolutionaries of those years were driven by a combination of moral outrage at the poverty and powerlessness of the vast majority of the Russian population and a feeling of guilt for their own comparative wealth and privilege. They were not only (or even primarily) seeking an end to autocracy and economic exploitation: above all they wanted to close the cultural and conceptual gap that existed between their Europeanized world and the seemingly impenetrable universe of the peasantry. As one Russian student put it at the time, “Should we not . . . give up our privileged position, give up scholarships and devote ourselves to learning a craft, so as to take part as simple artisans or laborers in the life of the people, and merge with it?”²⁷ Mikhail Bakunin perceived this sentiment when he called the young people of Russia to action: “Go to the people: there is your way, your life, your learning. . . . Young men of education must become not the people’s benefactors, not its dictators and guides, but merely a lever for the people to free itself, the unifier of the people’s own energies and forces. To gain the ability and right to serve the cause, the youth must submerge itself and drown in the people.”²⁸

This is precisely what a few thousand young people did—or tried to do—in 1873 and 1874, when students from all the major universities of the Empire spread out in an uncoordinated rush to the countryside. Their motives varied: some just wanted to serve the peasants as best they could (as doctors, teachers, veterinarians, etc.), while others had more specific plans for revolutionary agitation. Nearly all of them failed. The peasants were suspicious of the young intellectuals, with their unfamiliar words and their obscure motives, and many villagers summoned the police to deal with these strange outsiders. By the end of the “mad summer” of 1874 (as some contemporaries called it), between 2,000 and 4,000 individuals had “gone to the people,” and several hundred were arrested as a consequence.²⁹ These experiences did not lead to widespread disillusionment or resignation: instead, they inspired the formation of more tightly organized conspiratorial groups that combined the evangelical zeal of the “to the people” movement with a more specific political agenda aimed at the overthrow of the autocracy. In 1876 an organization called *Zemlya i Volya*

²⁷ From the memoirs of S. L. Chudnovsky, as quoted by Franco Venturi, *Roots of Revolution: A History of the Populist and Socialist Movements in Nineteenth Century Russia*, trans. Francis Haskell (New York, 1960), p. 359. For a psychohistorical analysis of this desire to merge with the people, see Richard Wortman, *The Crisis of Russian Populism* (Cambridge, 1967), p. 32. For a harshly critical interpretation of the motives of the populists, see Adam B. Ulam, *In the Name of the People: Prophets and Conspirators in Prerevolutionary Russia* (New York, 1977), p. 12.

²⁸ From an 1869 manifesto cited by Venturi, p. 368.

²⁹ Venturi, p. 505, reports that 4,000 people were “imprisoned, questioned, or at least harassed by the police” during the summer of 1874. A more modest figure of 2,000 participants is given in Derek Offord, *The Russian Revolutionary Movement in the 1880s* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 17.

(Land and Freedom) was formed, dedicated to both “agitation” and “the disorganization of the state.” This group orchestrated a more carefully planned infiltration of the countryside in 1877 and (more important) initiated direct political action against the tsarist regime. Although the issue provoked great controversy in revolutionary circles, some members of *Zemlya i Volya* were convinced that the time had come to use violence. In January 1878, a revolutionary named Vera Zasulich shot the governor of St. Petersburg, and, to the regime’s consternation, a sympathetic jury acquitted her. In February a conspiratorial group in Kiev tried to murder the assistant prosecutor of the city, and in May they succeeded in assassinating a high-ranking police officer. In August *Zemlya i Volya* killed the head of the infamous Third Section (the political police), bringing the violence directly to the inner circle of the autocracy’s elite. Finally, on March 13, 1881, a terrorist tossed a bomb into the Tsar’s carriage, killing both himself and the monarch.

In the reprisals that followed, the last remnants of the revolutionary underground were hunted down, and the organization soon collapsed. This blow would prove decisive, at least in the short term. Not only did most educated Russians turn against the revolutionaries after the assassination, but Alexander II was succeeded by the unapologetically reactionary and authoritarian Alexander III. Those few members of the underground who remained free after 1881 either fled abroad or were frightened into passivity. The resulting change in the political landscape was striking, and memoirists have described the decade of the 1880s as “the calm.”³⁰ The turmoil of the 1870s, however, had lasted long enough to present an example of revolutionary action to a generation of Poles, and just as things began to grow quiet in Moscow and Petersburg, Warsaw started to heat up once again.

Back in 1863, Polish nationalists had staged the last of the major nineteenth-century rebellions against Russian rule, only to meet with a crushing defeat. In the ensuing crackdown, thousands were executed or exiled, and the Polish Kingdom—now renamed the “Vistula Lands” in an effort to erase any trace of Polish identity—grew quiet. Intellectual life in the 1870s and early 1880s was characterized by a cautious form of depoliticized liberalism known to historians as “Warsaw positivism,” which was challenged only by the reactionary loyalism of the aristocracy and clergy.³¹ More radical views had been quite literally removed from the scene. As early as 1875, however, there were signs

³⁰ Arthur P. Mendel, *Dilemmas of Progress in Tsarist Russia: Legal Marxism and Legal Populism* (Cambridge, 1961), p. 89.

³¹ On the period of apparent calm after 1863, see my article, “The Social Nation and Its Futures: English Liberalism and Polish Nationalism in Late Nineteenth-Century Warsaw,” *American Historical Review* 101 (December 1996): 1470–92. On the debates between conservatives and liberals in those years, see Andrzej Jaszczuk, *Spór pozytywistów z konserwatystami o przyszłość Polski, 1870–1903* (Warsaw, 1986); Andrzej Szwarc,

that the revolutionary unrest in Russia might spread to Poland. In that year a few recent graduates of Warsaw University formed an ephemeral illegal group called “The Society for National Education” that echoed the populist ambitions of the “to the people” movement in Russia and sent a handful of students into the countryside to preach the gospel of revolution and patriotism (and literacy) to the peasants.³² Other, similar groups would follow, and throughout the 1870s and 1880s a small but steady stream of dedicated young people flowed into the villages, often performing genuine pedagogical services and establishing lasting (if unheralded) ties with small groups of peasants.³³ Meanwhile, more overtly political groups like *Zemlya i Volya* attracted some Polish members. A highly disproportionate share of the students at the Empire’s universities were Polish—as many as 25 percent at some institutions—and these young people were caught up in the wave of revolutionary activism that swept Russia in the 1870s.³⁴ The first Polish socialist “circles” (as they were called at the time) were formed in Petersburg in 1874, amid the excitement of the “to the people” movement, and an informal network linked Polish radicals from all the Russian universities before any attempt was made to spread the movement to the “Vistula Lands.” One participant in these early efforts described the situation in Warsaw at the time as “organizational stagnation.”³⁵

It took another two years for anything explicitly political to stir in the Kingdom, and even then the instigator was a young Polish student from the Petersburg Technical Institute, Ludwik Waryński.³⁶ By mid-1878 he had established

Od Wielopolskiego do Stronnictwa Polityki Realnej: Zwolennicy ugody z Rosją, ich poglądy i próby działalności politycznej (1864–1905) (Warsaw, 1990).

³² Zenon Kmiecik, “Początki ruchu młodzieżowego w Warszawie (1864–1904), in *Postępowe organizacje młodzieżowe w Warszawie, 1864–1976*, ed. Bogdana Hillebrandt (Warsaw, 1988), pp. 10–12; Jerzy Targalski, *Ludwik Waryński: Próba życia* (Warsaw, 1976), pp. 139–42. A similar group called the “Warsaw Circle of Popular Education” was founded a few years later. See Krzywicki (n. 15 above), 1:180–81.

³³ For a somewhat hagiographic account of these early efforts to establish ties between the intelligentsia and the peasantry, see Lech Słowiński, *Z myślą o Niepodległej: Z dziejów edukacji narodowej okresu postycyzniowego* (Poznań, 1993). For the recollections of one such “missionary,” see Maksymilian Malinowski, “Sześćdziesiąt lat nieprzerwalnej codziennej pracy i stosunków w dziedzinie życia kraju i potrzeb ludu polskiego b. Kongresowski od tego pokolenia, które wyszło z bytu pańszczyźnianego aż do pokolenia, które już samo budowało kulturę gospodarczą i społeczną wsi i samo rozwinęło ideę wywalczenia niepodległości Polski” (Archiwum Historii Ruchu Ludowego [Archive of the History of the Populist Movement], Warsaw, sygn. p. 52.; written in Warsaw, 1939).

³⁴ Targalski, pp. 22–34. Later a *numerus clausus* of 20 percent was set for Polish enrollment at Russian universities. See Venturi, p. 357.

³⁵ “Ze wspomnień,” *Przedświt* 1–3 (January–March 1896): 1–12.

³⁶ On Waryński and the first socialists, see Leon Baumgarten, *Dzieje Wielkiego Proletariatu* (Warsaw, 1966); Lucjan Blit, *The Origins of Polish Socialism: The History and Ideas of the First Polish Socialist Party, 1878–1886* (Cambridge, 1971); Józef Buszko,

a loose network of revolutionary cells with around 300 members, but at the end of that summer the police uncovered his nascent organization, forcing him to flee the country. During these years, tsarist officials in Warsaw complained that the virus of revolution was spreading from Russia to an otherwise pacified Poland. “Tied to the Russian socialists by a unity of doctrine and lineage,” wrote the chief prosecutor of Warsaw in a report from December 1878, “the members of the Warsaw circles must have been, and indeed were, in close contact with the Russian revolutionary circles. Those circles consider the Warsaw movement to be one of the manifestations of Russian socialism, and they are extremely interested in it.”³⁷ Viacheslav Plehve, then a police official in the Kingdom (and later the minister of the interior), reported in 1879 that virtually all the revolutionary agitation in the Kingdom came from Poles who had studied in Russian universities.³⁸ But although the spark came from the east, it would soon burn independently in the “Vistula Lands.” Despite the quick demise of all the groups formed in the 1870s (Russian and Polish alike), Ludwik Krzywicki (who was a student at that time) recalled these years as a turning point: the arrests and trials of these first activists, he claimed, inspired his classmates to further illegal undertakings.³⁹ What the Russians saw as the culmination of a revolutionary movement born of the frustrated hopes of the late 1850s the Poles perceived as a return to action after the post-uprising quiescence. The jailed revolutionaries who were mourned in St. Petersburg and Moscow as victims of a lost cause were idolized in Warsaw as martyrs to a struggle that was only just beginning (or reviving).

But *Głos* was much more than just a delayed Polish version of Russian populism because the young Warsaw intellectuals, even as they appropriated the vocabulary of their peers in Petersburg, Moscow, and Kiev, never allowed

Ryszard Kołodziejczyk, and Stanisław Michałkiewicz, “Początki ruchu robotniczego na ziemiach polskich,” in *Historia polskiego ruchu robotniczego do 1890 r.*, ed. Ryszard Kołodziejczyk (Warsaw, 1985), pp. 215–97; M. K. Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland* (Cambridge, 1959), pp. 12–13; Jerzy Myśliński, “Powstanie i działalność socjalno-rewolucyjnej partii proletariatu,” in Kołodziejczyk, ed., pp. 296–350; Na—Z., “Ludwik Waryński (osobiste wspomnienie),” *Przedświt*, Serya III (January–March 1896): 12–17; Norman Naimark, *The History of the “Proletariat”: The Emergence of Marxism in the Kingdom of Poland, 1870–1887* (Boulder, Colo., 1979); Włodzimierz Suleja, *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna, 1892–1948: Zarys dziejów* (Warsaw, 1988), pp. 11–20; Targalski; Marian Żychowski, *Polska myśl socjalistyczna XIX i XX wieku (do 1918 r.)* (Warsaw, 1976), pp. 91–93, 126–50.

³⁷ Report from the prosecutor of the Warsaw Judicial Chamber, Trakhimovsky, December 4, 1878, in *Procesy polityczne w Królestwie Polskim: Materiały do historii ruchu rewolucyjnego w Królestwie Polskiem. Materiały z okresu, 1878–1885. Zeszyt I: rok 1878–1879* (Kraków, 1907), p. 83.

³⁸ Report from Plehve to the minister of justice, April 6, 1879, in *ibid.*, pp. 12–13.

³⁹ Krzywicki, 1:89–90.

these ideas to challenge the centrality of “the nation.” (Indeed, the very term at the center of Russian populism—*narod* [the people]—is an ambiguous false friend for Slavs because it translates literally into Polish as *lud*, while the Polish word *naród* corresponds to the Russian *natsia* [nation].) The *niepokorni* were certain that in their new world there would be *both* social justice *and* national independence. At almost the same time *Głos* was founded, an illegal organization known as the “Union of Polish Youth” (*Związek Młodzieży Polskiej*, or “Zet” for short) was created. For many years “socialists” and “patriots” alike could find a home in Zet, and the lines between these two factions remained porous and vague.⁴⁰ Tomasz Ruskiewicz remembered the organization as an effort “to reconcile national aspirations with the slogans of social radicalism” and to create “a bridge in the form of a national socialism.”⁴¹ The statute of Zet suggested an affinity with *Głos*. “The leading idea of the Union,” it declared, “is the desire for national independence, mainly through the planned development and organization of national strength, [and] for the transformation of socioeconomic relations in the spirit of the interests of the *lud*.” Independence and social transformation were two sides of the same coin, and both were aimed at “preparing the *lud* to take an active and direct part in political life.” The statute did contain one brief caveat about the potential dangers of a “class struggle” untempered by patriotism, but then it went on in some detail about how workers should organize against their employers “in the spirit of

⁴⁰ Roman Dmowski, a leading member of Zet and later the leader of the radical right, was heard at the time singing the socialist anthem, “The Red Banner,” much to his later embarrassment. See Kazimierz Czarnocki, “Przyczynki do historii PPS,” in *Księga pamiątkowa PPS* (Warsaw, 1923), in Mariusz Kulakowski, *Roman Dmowski w świetle listów i wspomnień*, 2 vols. (London, 1968), 1:135. Dmowski later tried to dismiss his early socialism as an insincere tactical ploy. Without precluding that possibility, we ought to take his early rhetoric seriously. After all, even if he was never a sincere socialist of any sort (though I think he was, for a time), many of those drawn to Zet were attracted by its socialist rhetoric. See Roman Dmowski, “Relacja Romana Dmowskiego o Lidze Narodowej,” ed. Andrzej Garlicki, in *Przegląd Historyczny* 57 (1966): 420. The original copy of this document is in the archive of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Teka Kozickiego, sygn. 30. See also Władysław Jabłonowski, untitled memoir excerpts (Archiwum PAN w Krakowie, Teka Zielińskiego, sygn. 7847), p. 3. For different reasons, the socialists were also eager to establish that Zet was never “really” socialist. Emil Haecker, writing later in the socialist paper *Naprzód*, argued that the apparent socialism of Zygmunt Balicki (the founder of Zet) was part of a plot to infiltrate the socialist movement. See Emil Haecker, “Zygmunt Balicki III,” *Naprzód* 25 (11 October 1916): 3.

⁴¹ Tomasz Ruskiewicz, *Tajny związek młodzieży polskiej w latach 1887–1893* (Warsaw, 1926), pp. 20–21. See also Stanisław Dobrowolski, “Związek Młodzieży Polskiej (Zet), 1886–1906,” in *Nasza walka o szkołę polską, 1901–1917*, ed. Bogdan Nawroczyński (Warsaw, 1932), p. 117; Stanisław Grabski, “Wspomnienie o Lidze Narodowej” (Archiwum PAN w Warszawie, Teka Stanisława Kozickiego, sygn. 30, jednostek 3), pp. 43–62; Stefan Surzycki, *Z dziejów pamiętnego ‘Zetu’* (Kraków, 1930), p. 5.

defending and insuring the interests of the working strata.”⁴² Social division and disorder were not described as threats to national unity because the members of *Zet* imagined that Poland would attain such cohesion after the revolution, after the *lud* became the dominant element within the national whole. As long as the nation was thus positioned in the future, within a historical narrative, there was no need to worry about the dangers of class struggle in the present. The promise of social transformation and the devotion to the popular “strata” suggested here was sufficient to bring many socialists into the organization, and *Zet* remained a common institution until 1898, when the socialists finally set up their own separate youth group.⁴³

On May 3, 1891, *Zet* staged a public demonstration to commemorate the centenary of the Polish constitution of 1791. A group of students paraded down one of the central streets of Warsaw and (as expected) were met by the police. One hundred and eighteen people were arrested, one of whom, for unknown reasons, committed suicide in jail, provoking more demonstrations at his funeral.⁴⁴ Roman Dmowski, later the leader of the radical right, would remember these events as an expression of antisocialist nationalism, but the actual rhetoric of the day belies this.⁴⁵ In the proclamations issued for the occasion, the link between socialism (broadly defined, as it should be for the 1890s) and patriotism remained strong: “Our path is the further development of the ideas of freedom, equality, and brotherhood, the death of absolutism, exploitation, and privilege, in whatever forms they appear; it is the continued struggle for independence, the firm, ruthless, and inexorable defense of our national rights.”⁴⁶ The emphasis on the nation was still inextricably linked to a message of social emancipation, as demonstrated even more clearly in another manifesto issued for the same occasion. The resurrection of Poland, the text promised, would bring the collectivization (or nationalization) of all wealth, and the rich would pay for their sins:

We are not addressing those gentlemen who sweep the Tsar’s antechambers, [or] those rich men who live off of the blood and sweat of our people, [or] all of those who today live well even though the entire nation wastes away in poverty. [Instead we are

⁴² Dobrowolski, p. 112.

⁴³ Hillebrandt, ed. (n. 32 above), pp. 19–27.

⁴⁴ Cywiński (n. 12 above), pp. 343–44; Józef Hłasko, “W redakcji ‘Głosu,’ *Gazeta Warszawska* 286 (September 16, 1932): 5. Pobóg-Malinowski later tried to deny that this demonstration had anything to do with reanimating the Polish national movement. Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski, *Narodowa Demokracja, 1887–1918: Fakty i dokumenty* (Warsaw, 1933), pp. 75–76.

⁴⁵ Dmowski, “Relacja Romana Dmowskiego,” pp. 423, 427.

⁴⁶ “Sto lat!” Warsaw, March 1891 (Biblioteka Narodowa [National Library]), Warsaw, *Dokumenty Życia Społecznego* [hereafter BN, DŻS], Teka IM). See also “Odezwa Ligi Polskiej, 3ego Maja,” in Kozicki, *Historia Ligi Narodowej* (n. 18 above), p. 507.

addressing] you, who irrigate with your bloody sweat the beloved land that your fathers watered with their own blood. You are the root of the nation and the future belongs to you. . . . Proclaim to the worker that all the fruits of his labor belong to him; announce to the villager that the land which he plowed and sowed is his property. From [your] great voice will arise the fatherland, free from the blood, tears, and suffering of the majority of its sons.⁴⁷

For the writers at *Głos* and the student activists in *Zet*, the “class struggle” did not weaken the national bond but strengthened it by locating the “national interest” in the *lud*, by declaring that “the root of the nation and the future” belonged to the peasants and the workers. On one level this was an old argument, heard throughout the nineteenth century whenever Polish nationalists realized that the nobles and intellectuals could not liberate the nation on their own. As Stefan Żeromski put it in his diary in 1887: “Polishness and patriotism do not exist in the manor houses that I know. Patriotism is concealed today in hiding places, in tiny student apartments, in the little rooms of pensioners. Oh, Lord, maybe it will also penetrate someday to the peasant hut! Then things will be different. Then I will also cry with all my voice, with a terrible voice: revolution, revolution, revolution!”⁴⁸ This well-established reasoning, however, still cast the peasants as a force to be won over to the supposedly larger cause of national independence. For Seweryn Czetweryński, the *lud* was little more than the means of grounding the desire “to act” in a social “reality”:

Whether on the social right or left, both those believing in socialism and the pioneers of the national idea . . . both one and the other wanted to act, and to base their actions neither on a chimera nor on the current unreal foundations, but on a basis that sooner or later promised attainment of the goal. Both one and the other placed in the foreground the acquisition by the national cause of the numerous masses from which the Nation is made, for which the old soldiers fought and died without the aureole of victory, and for which [the masses] themselves suffered, without an awareness of what they were suffering for, or why they suffered.⁴⁹

Głos argued that this approach was insufficient. It was not enough to say that the victory of the national cause would improve the lives of all; it was not enough merely to win over the masses to the struggle for independence. The nation itself had to become popular, and the voice of the *lud* had to become hegemonic (if I may use an anachronistic expression) before the allegiance of the people could be demanded or expected. In other words, the writers at *Głos*

⁴⁷ As cited by Pobóg-Malinowski, p. 78. The original of this document, like so many archival sources for this period, was destroyed during World War II.

⁴⁸ Żeromski (n. 14 above), p. 293.

⁴⁹ S. Czetweryński, *Na wozie i pod wozem (1837–1917): Wspomnienia z lat ubiegłych wnukom i wnuczkom opowiedziane* (Poznań, n.d.), as quoted by Roman Wapiński, *Pokolenia Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej* (Wrocław, 1991), p. 99.

could accommodate social discord in the present because they imagined national unity in the future. Popławski addressed this issue directly in 1888:

Our argumentation is designated only for those readers who, sharing our democratic principles in economic and social concerns, deceive themselves with the worn-out cliché that national concerns are greater than the concerns of the *lud*, since the latter is included within the former, as a part in a whole. . . . This is, in our opinion, one of the most harmful of social prejudices. Not *through the nation for the lud*, but *through the lud for the nation*; that is a short formula of the principles that we profess, that is the practical conclusion from the sociological principle we declared: “the subordination of the interests of all other strata to the interests of the *lud*.”

The nation, Popławski wrote, was generally understood to be “a collection of all social strata, joined by a common descent, historical tradition, and political ties,” but this definition should not be allowed to obscure the fact that, “in societies in which there is a class system, based on the real privileging of certain interests—that is, in the contemporary civilized societies—all gains designated for the benefit of the whole in fact become the exclusive or primary property of the privileged strata.”⁵⁰ Because of this, a truly national Poland could only exist *in time*, at the end of a historical narrative that promised a revolutionary transcendence of social inequality and inequity.

The publications of the *niepokorni* returned to this theme repeatedly during the late 1880s and early 1890s, with a critical eye toward those who aspired to “lead” the masses. The young Popławski hoped to open himself to the voices of the peasants, even at the cost of abandoning the doctrines of “reason” and “science.” He argued that “politics, insofar as it is not locked within the boundaries of diplomatic projects, has to deal with the collective actions of the more or less numerous masses, with unconscious, instinctual activity in which feelings play the dominant role. . . . The politics of feeling—if based not on the aspirations of certain narrow strata which can be artificially and easily aroused, but on the aspirations of the entire whole—will never go astray, because the feelings of the masses are inborn [and] healthy.”⁵¹ In other words, the intelligentsia must negate or suppress their own “easily aroused” patriotic emotions and listen to the “inborn and healthy” *vox populi*. Popławski once argued (in a passage that would later seem ironically self-accusatory) that educated activists should not look down on the peasants but should instead respect their individual talents and wisdom: “We are still held back by the old bad habit of looking down upon people who do not belong to the privileged professions. . . . Often even people of good will would like to lock those strata into some sort

⁵⁰ J. L. Popławski, “Lud i naród,” *Głos* 3 (April 30/May 12, 1888): 217–18.

⁵¹ Jan Ludwik Popławski, “Obniżenie ideałów,” *Głos* 2 (December 20, 1886/January 1, 1887): 3–8, in *Pisma polityczne* (n. 23 above), 1:6.

of caste exclusivity. They imagine the peasants as honest but ignorant. . . . They use in writing [and] in speech the expression ‘my brothers,’ but they speak to them not as brother to brothers, equal to equals, but as guardians, as teachers, with indulgence, but from on high.”⁵² In this passage Popławski even switched from the totalizing term *lud* to the more internally differentiated expression, “*ludzie*” (“people” instead of “*the* people”). He had discovered that there were real people within “the people,” and he hoped to work *with* them for a common future, not *on* them to realize the intelligentsia’s goals. The writers at *Głos* were not always as open as Popławski wanted them to be, but frequent injunctions such as this made it difficult to ignore entirely the voices “from below.” As the *niepokorni* pursued the task of “enlightening” the peasants, there would be writers like Popławski suggesting that the intelligentsia ought to listen as well as speak.

Like Popławski, Zygmunt Balicki (later one of the most authoritarian voices of the nationalist right) was originally committed to a radically participatory version of democracy. In 1886 he wrote a three-part essay in the Galician paper *Przegląd Społeczny* entitled “Democracy and Liberalism,” in which he berated liberals for mouthing the slogans of democracy while suppressing the voices of the people. The institutions of parliamentary democracy, Balicki argued, were really a disguised type of “force” hidden under a promise of “freedom.” The root of this hypocrisy was the tendency of liberals “to see society as a totality, contained within a state form. . . . In relation to society liberalism considers the legislative body to be an expression of the majority, and the majority to be the expression of the totality.” The young Balicki, like the young Popławski, was opposed to any ideology that erased individuality and transformed the subalterns into an undifferentiated mass. In contrast to the false liberties of liberalism, Balicki argued for a truly “democratic” political system: “The participation of everyone in the resolution of public matters is real democracy; the participation of everyone in the election of a body designed to resolve such matters characterizes liberalism. The first possesses a natural tendency to broaden such participation, the second to restrict its practical force. Democracy takes as its point of departure the interests of the citizen just as he perceives them himself. . . . Liberalism, proceeding from a conception of society as a unified totality, and guided by *raison d’état*, takes on the form of centralized parliamentarianism.” Balicki concluded unequivocally that “there is no place [in a democracy] for hierarchy, for bureaucracy.”⁵³

⁵² Jan Ludwik Popławski, “Nałóg kastowy,” *Głos* 6 (October 24, 1891): 512–13, in Popławski, *Szkice literackie i naukowe*, ed. Józef Hłasko (Warsaw, 1910), p. 134. Hłasko incorrectly dated this article from 1890.

⁵³ Zygmunt Balicki, “Demokratyzm i liberalizm,” *Przegląd Społeczny* 1 (August–October 1886). Polish intellectuals from the Russian partition frequently published in Galicia, where press censorship was light. Eventually an entire colony of political refu-

Balicki and Popławski had identified a problem that would plague the *niepokorni*: how could the intelligentsia serve the people without imposing their own ideals, goals, and doctrines? How could they be sincerely popular without forcing the masses into a conceptual universe not of their own making? How could they embody the nation in the *lud* without at the same time teaching the peasants to believe in that infamous “chimera” of elite nationalism? As Balicki put it in 1892, “We will only achieve more perfect forms of the social system when the leading intellectual strata democratize their instincts to rule, [when they] come off the pedestal of ‘older brothers’ and merge with the *lud*.”⁵⁴ For some, this would be a lifelong dilemma and an unrealized goal. For others, it would soon become a discarded ideal, not worth pursuing.

HISTORY AND THE *Lud*

To sustain the national imagery described above, the *niepokorni* required a historical narrative. One could be both a patriot and a socialist as long as it was possible to accept that disorder and conflict in the present would be resolved by national unity (under the hegemony of the *lud*) in the future. To really listen to the voices of the people, as Popławski and Balicki wanted, required that one accept *both* the disruptive force *and* the promising telos of revolution. The virus that would undermine this vision was the fin de siècle skepticism of the sociological imagination—*itself*, ironically, driven by a desire to listen to the voices of “the people” without imposing on them the ideological frameworks of the socialist intelligentsia. When some writers and activists began to question the viability of revolutionary teleology, they found themselves faced with a painful choice: if class struggle was not destined to lead to a democratic nation, then such conflict could only be a threat to whatever national cohesion existed in the present. In other words, without a faith in a radical historical narrative, the *lud* and the *naród* became antagonistic rather than complementary concepts. Thus began the slide toward Partha Chatterjee’s “discourse of order.”

The distinction between these two competing images of the nation first

gees from the Kingdom would settle in Lwów, but even after years of residence there, they still felt themselves to be living in a strange world that was evidently Polish but at the same time inexplicably alien. Zdzisław Dębicki, a student from Warsaw who escaped to Lwów in 1895 to avoid arrest, recalled later his first impression on entering Galicia: “The land was the same, the sky above it the same, on that land the same nation, but yet everything was different.” See Zdzisław Dębicki, *Iskry w popiołach: Wspomnienia lwowskie* (Poznań, n.d.), pp. 3–4.

⁵⁴ Zygmunt Balicki, “Genewa, 30 listopada 1892,” *Wolne Polskie Słowo* 6 (December 15, 1892): 3–4.

emerged in a bitter debate in the Warsaw press from 1889. During the first three months of that year the socialist Ludwik Krzywicki published a controversial series of essays in *Prawda* (a respected Warsaw weekly) entitled “Democratic Illusions,” in which he rejected the idea that the *lud* could be defined as a broad assembly of all the oppressed, for whom there could be a single collective interest. As Krzywicki positioned the *lud* within his own vision of the future, he argued that only some of its members (the proletariat) possessed the power of historical agency. Whereas the “democrats” wanted only to “satisfy the demands of the ‘*lud*,’” Krzywicki based his hopes on the “stratum” that awaits a greater future: the proletariat.⁵⁵ Because the workers alone could participate in the march of progress, the other “branch of the ‘*lud*’” (the peasantry) was doomed to an “inevitable” collapse. There was therefore no point in trying to improve the lot of the peasants because this would only prolong their agony as history continued its march toward urbanization and industrialization.⁵⁶

Although Krzywicki contributed several more articles to *Głos* throughout the summer and fall of 1889, “Democratic Illusions” exposed irresolvable tensions, as J. H. Siemieniecki, one of Krzywicki’s soon-to-be-former colleagues at *Głos*, promptly revealed. “We do not believe,” he wrote, “that a temporary improvement of the fate of any part of the working *lud* can hinder the realization of a better future for all of society.” He suggested that Krzywicki was not genuinely concerned about the fate of the oppressed because anyone “who wants above all to bring about the happiness of humanity will always support all reforms that bring relief to current suffering, making possible the development and autonomy of the working masses.”⁵⁷ In response, Krzywicki wrote that “humanitarian feelings are necessary, but no less necessary is a ‘doctrine,’ . . . so as not to go astray, but to go along a more certain path toward greater prosperity.” Because Siemieniecki had no such doctrine, Krzywicki believed, he was destined to fall victim to a “utopia” that would “temporarily increase prosperity, when more fundamental improvements are possible.”⁵⁸ The debate grew increasingly hostile. In the next issue of *Głos* Siemieniecki labeled Krzywicki a “pseudoradical” whose “vulgarization” of Marxism differed little

⁵⁵ K. R. Żywicki, “Złudzenia demokratyczne,” *Prawda* 9 (February 9/January 28, 1889): 64–66. For two views on the disputes that arose from this article, see Krzywicki (n. 15 above), 3:86–94; and [Perl] (n. 15 above), pp. 232–33.

⁵⁶ K. R. Żywicki, “Złudzenia demokratyczne,” *Prawda* 9 (February 16/4–March 2/February 18, 1889): 75, 88–90.

⁵⁷ J. H. Siemieniecki, “Rachunek bieżący I,” *Głos* 5 (February 24/March 8, 1890): 113–15. *Głos* tended to support all social reform legislation, whatever the source. See, e.g., J. L. P., “Doniosła próba,” *Głos* 4 (April 15/27, 1889): 213–14.

⁵⁸ K. R. Żywicki, “Tymczasowy obrachunek,” *Prawda* 10 (March 15/3, 1890): 129–31.

from the doctrines of *laissez-faire*.⁵⁹ Popławski added, a few issues later, that the so-called orthodox Marxism of Krzywicki was just “a refuge for narrow routine and intellectual backwardness.”⁶⁰ Krzywicki, in turn, described the worldview of *Głos* as unstable, destined to slide toward the right. “On the pages of that paper,” he wrote in his memoirs, “there appeared new names, straying ever further in their conclusions from the old populist credo, and thus ever more ready to deal politely with other strata—particularly landowners and clerics.”⁶¹

Krzywicki would have us believe that he was resisting a rising tide of conservatism among his fellow *niepokorni*, but this was not entirely accurate (at least not yet). As we have seen, as late as 1891 the “patriots” in *Zet* could march under banners calling for the nationalization of industry and landownership. But if Krzywicki had mischaracterized the polemics of 1889/90, so had his opponents at *Głos*. Aleksander Więckowski wrote at the time that “economic concerns do not encompass the entire meaning of these matters. . . . From our position it is desirable to have Polish peasants. If [Krzywicki] simply cannot recognize the importance of the national side of this problem, that is one thing; if, being a publicist with mediocre theoretical training, he does not perceive that side, [then] he is doctrinaire, that is, a person with a narrow mental horizon.”⁶² At about the same time Popławski published an essay attacking the socialists’ May Day demonstration as an effort to create “a purely international worker’s solidarity.”⁶³ This was the inverse of Krzywicki’s argument: while Marxists wanted to deny the socialist credentials of *Głos*, their former colleagues wanted to cast the debate in terms of patriotism versus internationalism. Both sides refused to recognize that *each* was committed (in 1889–90)

⁵⁹ J. H. Siemieniecki, “Rachunek bieżący II,” *Głos* 5 (March 10/22, 1890): 142–43, and “Rachunek bieżący III,” *Głos* 5 (March 24/April 5, 1890): 167–68. At this point the debate became somewhat petty. “We never had a very high opinion of the scientific ability of Mr. K. R. Żywicki,” Siemieniecki wrote, “and we judged skeptically his ability to write anything original.” *Głos* had only published his work because they believed “that he could write a perfectly good summary of some book or article.” Krzywicki, in turn, responded to the charge that he advocated *laissez-faire* by demanding “satisfaction.” One can only assume that he was joking, since socialists were not supposed to believe in dueling. In any case, their dispute remained rhetorical. See K. R. Żywicki, “Tymczasowy obrachunek,” *Prawda* 10 (March 29/17, 1890): 153–55.

⁶⁰ J. L. P., “Bezwiadni wsteczniczy,” *Głos* 5 (April 14/26, 1890): 199–200. An anonymous contributor to *Głos* even implied that Krzywicki had sold out to the bourgeoisie. See “Z prasy,” *Głos* 5 (May 12/24, 1890): 254.

⁶¹ Krzywicki, 3: 92–94. See also K. R. Żywicki, “Tymczasowy obrachunek,” *Prawda* 10 (March 29/17, 1890): 153–55.

⁶² A. Więckowski, “Wątpliwa pozycja pewnego obrachunku,” *Głos* 5 (March 31/April 12, 1890): 179.

⁶³ “J. L. P., “Rozwiąana chmura,” *Głos* 5 (April 28/May 10, 1890): 223–24.

to both “the nation” and “the people.” Neither seemed to perceive that the real issue dividing them at the time was not a conflict between the concepts of class and nation but a clash between diachronic and synchronic visions of the social world.

Some of the earliest Marxists in Poland were, in fact, militantly international—so much so that they negated the value of Polish independence—but these views were shared by very few Polish socialists in the early 1890s.⁶⁴ More common were the ideas of Stanisław Mendelson, the editor of an émigré socialist magazine called *Przedświt* (The dawn). In 1891 he insisted that socialism was not only compatible with the goal of Polish liberation but also necessary for its achievement. His complaint against the patriots was based on their (alleged) refusal to understand this:

In our society there are only two parties, two camps: on one side stand the exploiters and those living from privileges, on the other side the exploited and those from whom the fruits of labor have been stolen. . . . There are only two parties—listen to me, Mr. Politician, you who want independence above all else. Understand that without a conscious popular organization, without a social revolution, you won't get a free Poland. There are only two parties! One socialist, *ludowe*, working for Equality and Freedom, the party of the future, the party of victory. The other is the nobleman's camp, bristling with government bayonets, the party of oppression and slavery, exploitation and darkness, the party of death.⁶⁵

Without softening his rhetoric of class struggle, Mendelson appropriated the patriotic argument by defining the nation in terms of the “working people” and by consigning the capitalists and landowners to “the party of death.” Perhaps equally important was Mendelson's use in this essay of the term “*lud*” rather than “proletariat” or “worker.” Later *Przedświt* offhandedly announced that terminology was irrelevant: “We can exchange the word ‘worker’ with the

⁶⁴ On the uncompromising internationalism of some of the first Polish socialists, see Baumgarten, p. 10; Blit, p. 46; Buszko, Kołodziejczyk, and Michałkiewicz, pp. 276–78; Dziewanowski, pp. 12–13; Naimark, pp. 96–104; and Suleja, pp. 11–20 (all n. 36 above); Targalski (n. 32 above), pp. 100–101; Żychowski (n. 36 above), pp. 91–93, 109–12, 126–50. On the small socialist group that took this internationalist tradition into the 1890s and the twentieth century, see Robert Blobaum, *Feliks Dzierżyński and the SDKPiL: A Study of the Origins of Polish Communism* (Boulder, Colo., 1984); J. P. Nettle, *Rosa Luxemburg* (London, 1966); Marian Orzechowski, *Rewolucja, Socializm, Tradycje: Przeszłość narodowa i tradycje w myśli politycznej rewolucyjnego nurtu polskiego ruchu robotniczego*, 2d ed. (Warsaw, 1984), pp. 21–161; Andrzej Walicki, “Rosa Luxemburg and the Question of Nationalism in Polish Marxism (1893–1914),” *Slavic and East European Review* 61 (October 1983): 565–82.

⁶⁵ Stanisław Mendelson, “Wygadali się!” *Przedświt* 3 (18 July 1891): 1–3. See a very similar argument one month later in “Polityka ludowa,” *Przedświt* 6 (8 August 1891): 1–3.

word ‘*lud*’ a thousand times, and it will not change reality. Strength does not lie in a word, but in the real state of things.”⁶⁶

The Polish Socialist Party (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna, or PPS), which was formed in 1892, followed Mendelson’s approach. The first words of the party program evoked a memory of national struggle: “One hundred years have passed since the moment when the Polish Republic, fallen upon by three neighboring powers, proved incapable of creating from its bosom enough strength to resist the invaders. With the loss of state existence, with the snuffing out of the active political life of the nation, the development of our social relations stagnated, and the whole country suffered from the inabilities of our ruling classes.” Poland, the program continued (in words that would be repeated often in party documents), was suffering from two “yokes,” both “internal reaction” and the “disgraceful [*hańbiące*] cohabitation with tsardom.”⁶⁷ A PPS manifesto from 1894 declared that “along with the Russian subjects of the tsar we bear the oppression of an autocratic government, but aside from that they abuse us as non-Russians, as non-Orthodox.”⁶⁸ Nearly every PPS manifesto would end with the words, “Long Live Independent Workers’ Poland!” The two adjectives had to go together because either taken separately was only half the message of the party. The PPS was committed to both national cohesion and social unrest, and they joined the two by locating the final realization of the nation at the end of a historical narrative that was driven by “class struggle.” That is, the nation could only fully come into being after the revolution, when the people (or the workers) came to define the national interest; until then Poland would be a site for social conflict. The nation was a *goal*, to be attained both by regaining Polish independence and by establishing the hegemony of the proletariat. The whole worldview of the PPS was held together by this faith in history, this conviction that social disorder was tolerable in the present because national unity was guaranteed in the postrevolutionary future.

Just as the PPS was being formed, a group known as the “National League”

⁶⁶ “Potrzeba jedności,” *Przedświt* 39/40 (March 26, 1892): 4–5.

⁶⁷ “Szkic programu Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej,” in *Materyały do historii PPS i ruchu rewolucyjnego w zaborze rosyjskim od r. 1893 do r. 1904*, vol. 1, *Rok 1893–1897* (Warsaw, 1907), pp. 8–9. On the formation of the PPS, see Jerzy Myśliński, “Portret zbiorowy uczestników paryskiego zjazdu socjalistów polskich w 1892 r.,” in *Stulecie Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej, 1892–1992*, ed. Marian Marek Drozdowski, Jerzy Myśliński, Janusz Szejbecki, and Anna Żarnowska (Warsaw, 1993), pp. 24–35; [Perł], pp. 384–99; sp., “Wspomnienia z dwóch lat (1892–1893),” in *Z pola walki: Zbiór materyałów tyczących się polskiego ruchu socjalistycznego* (London, 1904), pp. 28–34; Suleja, pp. 24–30; Stanisław Wojciechowski, *Moje wspomnienia*, vol. 1 (Lwów and Warsaw, 1938), pp. 48–52; Anna Żarnowska, “Wokół zjazdu paryskiego polskich socjalistów w 1892 r.,” in Drozdowski et al., eds., pp. 12–23.

⁶⁸ Untitled manifesto, PPS, September 8, 1894 (Archiwum Akt Nowych, Warsaw Zbiór Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej, sygn. mf. 2552). See also M. Kelles-Krauz,

arose alongside it. This organization, created by Zygmunt Balicki, Roman Dmowski, and Jan Ludwik Popławski in 1892, was supposed to serve as the focal point for “patriotic” activism, but it was not immediately hostile to the PPS.⁶⁹ Stanisław Wojciechowski, later president of Poland and then a leading socialist, recalled that in the early 1890s the two groups were friendly rivals and would even print each other’s literature if the need arose.⁷⁰ Such conflicts as did exist between them were always kept quiet, and (until 1905) no one ever exposed an opponent to the Russian authorities.⁷¹ The National League and the PPS moved further apart as the turn of the century approached, but in the early 1890s they still spoke the same language: both perceived class struggle within the nation, and both remained committed to an international struggle for Polish independence. What, then, distinguished these two formations? The answer to this question can be found by returning to the dispute between *Głos* and Ludwik Krzywicki in 1889/90. The two sides in that debate were divided by a fundamental problem: how (or whether) to position the *lud* in historical time.

On one level, this debate was a local manifestation of a controversy that was then raging among revolutionaries all over the Russian Empire, between those who continued to believe in the possibility of an agrarian socialism based on the *obshchina* (the commune) and those who placed their faith in the coming

“W kwestyi ‘równoległości,’” *Przedświt* 7 (July 1895): 19–22; “Etapy,” *Przedświt* 8 (August 1894): 1–4.

⁶⁹ Oppenheim exaggerates when he writes that, with the foundation of the National League, “a process began of cultural movement towards extreme nationalism. People who were inclined to democratic radicalism and socialism left its ranks.” This only appears true in hindsight: in the early 1890s the National League’s repudiation of socialism was many years in the future. See Israel Oppenheim, “The ‘National Democrats’—Endecja—Attitude to the Jewish Question at the Outset (1895–1905),” p. 3. A Hebrew version of this essay appeared in *Gal-Ed*, vol. 10 (1987). My thanks to Stephen Corrsin for giving me a copy of the English translation of this article.

⁷⁰ Wojciechowski, p. 77. For contemporary socialist commentary on the formation of the National League, see *Przedświt* 7 (July 1894): 26; “Wyjaśnienie,” *Przedświt* 12 (December 1894): 21–22; M. Lusnia, “W kwestyi ‘równoległości,’” *Przedświt* 7 (July 1895): 19–22; and the 1895 forum on this issue: S. Lasota, “O stosunku do patryotów: W kwestyi ‘monopolu’”; Ignotus, “Kilka słów o patryotach”; Michał Lusnia, “Państwo konspiracyjne i Skarb Narodowy”; Lusnia, “Rachunek,” *Przedświt* 10/11 (October/November 1895): 1–12. Similar openness was demonstrated in the National League’s earliest texts. See *Z dzisiejszej doby VI: Kilka słów o stanowisku rządu rosyjskiego wobec naszych ruchów robotniczych* (Kraków, 1893), pp. 4, 10–12, and *Z dzisiejszej doby IX: Warszawska młodzież uniwersytecka* (n.p., 1894), pp. 6–7. See also Dmowski’s promise to limit himself to constructive criticism of socialism in a letter to Bolesław Limanowski, December 2, 1895 (Biblioteka PAN w Krakowie, Teka Józefa Zielińskiego, sygn. 7808).

⁷¹ Marian Bogacz, *Akademicy Warszawy: Z dziejów organizacji studenckich w XIX wieku* (Warsaw, 1960), pp. 326–27; Stefan Kieniewicz, “Polska kultura polityczna w XIX wieku,” in *Dzieje kultury politycznej w Polsce*, ed. Józef Andrzej Gierowski (Warsaw, 1977), pp. 145–48; Koszutski (n. 16 above), pp. 78–79.

of capitalism and the rise of an industrial proletariat. The Russian translation of Karl Marx's *Capital* (vol. 1) came out in 1872, complete with a passage that would eventually provoke great controversy:

Intrinsically, it is not a question of the higher or lower degree of development of the social antagonisms that spring from the natural laws of capitalist production. It is a question of these laws themselves, of these tendencies winning their way through and working themselves out with iron necessity. The country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future. . . . One nation can and should learn from others. Even when a society has begun to track down the natural laws of its movement—and it is the ultimate aim of this work to reveal the economic law of motion of modern society—it can neither leap over the natural phases of its development nor remove them by decree. But it can shorten and lessen the birth-pangs.⁷²

Georgii Plekhanov was one of the first Russians to perceive the challenge that Marxism posed for a populist. No revolutionary could stop the march of time, he argued: “This process sometimes takes place over a very long period, but once it has reached a certain degree of intensity it can no longer be halted by any ‘seizures of power’ on the part of this or that secret society.” That “degree of intensity” had already been reached in Russia, insisted Plekhanov, and further capitalist development was inevitable. Both the willful actions of the revolutionaries and the ancient traditions of the *obshchina* were “powerless and defenseless before the logic of economic evolution.”⁷³

Needless to say, not all Russian revolutionaries were convinced by Plekhanov's reasoning because it threatened to foreclose the possibility that the individual could do anything to alter the course of history. Publicists like Vasilyi Vorontsov retained their faith in the power of revolutionary action: “If we are able to interest society in our plans, if we can evoke in the individual the feelings, wishes, and thoughts necessary for us, we ourselves can destroy the noto-

⁷² Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York, 1977), pp. 91–92. On Marx's initial reception in Russia, and his attitude toward the idea of a separate Russian path of development, see Richard Kindersley, *The First Russian Revisionists: A Study of 'Legal Marxism' in Russia* (Oxford, 1962); Mendel (n. 30 above), pp. 154–55; Offord (n. 29 above), pp. 116–60; Wortman (n. 27 above), p. 146. Mendel, Offord, and Wortman stress that most of Marx's Russian readers in the 1870s read him somewhat superficially for his critique of capitalism, without perceiving his ideas as a threat to the populist vision. Walicki, in contrast, argues that the populist worldview grew out of a reaction to Marxism. See Andrzej Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism: Studies in the Social Philosophy of the Russian Populists* (Oxford, 1969), p. 132.

⁷³ G. V. Plekhanov, “Our Differences,” in *A Documentary History of Russian Thought from the Enlightenment to Marxism*, ed. W. J. Leatherbarrow and D. C. Offord (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1987), pp. 294–96. On the reasons this sort of determinism might be appealing to a Russian revolutionary, see Mendel, pp. 104–5.

rious law of history and create a new one in its place.”⁷⁴ Nikolai Mikhailovsky was less hopeful, but even as he wavered in his opposition to the Marxist vision of history, he continued to insist that individuals had to act *as if* they could change the world:

Let it be, in fact, a fatal mistake and useless folly, a futile attempt to stop the inexorable movement of history which, all the same, will take its own course and mercilessly crush all who oppose it. But at least admit that there was in this neither exaggerated deference toward the West nor disdain for the hopes and needs of the great majority of the people. . . . Concerning the fatal mistake and useless folly, I think that it is not at all a rare occurrence in history for people to be actually condemned by fate to a futile opposition against a clearly evident and far advanced historical process. And this is not from obstinacy, but from the same motivation that leads one deliberately to dive into the water at the risk of one's own life to save a drowning man who is past saving.⁷⁵

As mentioned above, the revolutionaries in the Kingdom had close ties to their Russian peers and predecessors, and they participated in many of the same disputes. As always, though, Polish intellectuals appropriated Russian (and Western) arguments according to their own distinct polemical needs. Krzywicki had declared in 1889 that the peasantry would “inevitably” be destroyed by the forces of progress so it was senseless to try to help them. It was better to encourage their proletarianization, so as not to prolong their agony. Aleksander Więckowski and the others at *Głos* were disturbed by this claim, and they responded with arguments similar to those offered by Vorontsov and Mikhailovsky. But in the Kingdom this debate had ramifications that extended beyond the original issues of economic development and the efficacy of revolutionary action. The Polish situation differed from the Russian in two fundamental ways. First, the discussion about a “separate road” to socialism had limited resonance in the Kingdom. Not only did Poland lack a tradition of communal land ownership, but, in addition, by the 1880s Warsaw, Łódź, and other Polish towns were industrialized enough to make it impossible to imagine that capitalism might be avoided. More important, there were (as always in Poland) *national* implications to this debate. When Krzywicki defended the iron laws of history and denied the power of free will, he brought into the open the great tension at the heart of the *niepokorni*'s reconciliation between *lud* and *naród*, between social change and national unity. The writers at *Głos* responded to Krzywicki's Marxist determinism by reiterating their ability to change the future and by insisting that they wanted to improve the lives of the poor and oppressed *today*, without waiting for the amoral and uncaring forces of history

⁷⁴ V. P. Vorontsov, *Ot semidesyatykh godov k devyatisotym* (St. Petersburg, 1907), as cited in Mendel, p. 35.

⁷⁵ Nikolai Mikhailovsky, “Literatura i zhizn,” *Russkaya mysl* (June 1892), as cited by Mendel, p. 97.

to take their course. They were going to worry about the actually existing peasants and workers instead of remaining fixed on the ultimate triumph of a prophesied revolutionary proletariat. This decision became part of a broader turn away from historical time and toward social space. With this move, *Głos* took the first step away from the comforting conviction that national disunity in the present could be resolved by the realization of a progressive historiosophy.

The focal point of this debate was the definition of the *lud*. Więckowski explored this term at length in a major essay series entitled “The *Lud* in Democratic Programs,” published in 1890 in response to the controversy with Krzywicki. Więckowski accused Krzywicki of using the term *lud* as “a name without meaning, a verbal sign without content.” In contrast, Więckowski wrote, *Głos* defined the *lud* as a concrete social formation consisting of “various social groups—such as factory workers, rural workers, craftsmen, small landowners, and so forth.” All these people were linked by their status as “the direct producers of material value.” Więckowski was *not* setting the peasants against the proletariat, and the disputes that followed were not between rural populists and urban socialists. In fact, in this particular article Więckowski devoted most of his attention to the urban poor.⁷⁶ Więckowski contrasted his devotion to the “real” interests of the *lud* with the prophetic idealism of Krzywicki. Marxism, wrote Więckowski, lost sight of the eternal struggle between the powerful and disempowered because it posited a fanciful story of progress within which only some of the oppressed gained historical agency. *Głos*, in contrast, offered a timeless vision of the *lud* which,

with one thread, ties together all the phases of the political development of societies. . . . It is a fact that the division of political societies [*społeczeństwa państwowe*] into *ludowa* and non-*ludowa* parts encompasses the whole field of their economic and social antagonisms. This is the background on which, over the course of centuries, the changing picture of the struggle for the bread and rights of some, and for the privileges of others, has appeared. Against this background, in our day, threatening political problems rooted in the economic relations of capital and labor are taking shape, [and these] constitute only a new form of the same eternal essence.⁷⁷

Więckowski accused Krzywicki of a narrow, doctrinaire attitude that allowed him to see only a limited class struggle, instead of “perceiving the more general opposition arising from the division of society into *ludowa* and non-*ludowa* masses.” The writers at *Głos* imagined a bifurcated world, where the specifics of any social conflict were irrelevant variations on a universal theme.

⁷⁶ A. Więckowski, “Lud w programach demokratycznych,” *Głos* 5, no. 23 (May 26/June 7, 1890): 273–75.

⁷⁷ A. Więckowski, “Lud w programach demokratycznych,” *Głos* 5, no. 24 (June 2/14, 1890): 288–89.

The *lud* was the rhetorical key that made this argument possible. As Więckowski put it, “we have a community [*ogół*] of people engaged in physical labor, materially disinherited, intellectually debased, economically exploited, socially handicapped, giving the most to society [but] taking from it the least—a community of all those who, in contrast to the community of those truly privileged in every respect, we call the *lud*.”⁷⁸

This concept of the *lud* would provide the contributors to *Głos* with the tools needed to argue that they were listening to the voices of the poor and oppressed, rather than imposing their own agendas. If one did not believe in a specific historical narrative, one had to serve the “real” needs of the people as they appeared at any given moment. Indeed, *Głos* would be programmatically (so to speak) opposed to all programs. Więckowski described two types of “democratic” action:

[The first] has as a goal the direct improvement of the existence of that class, or the elevation of its social role. [The second comes] from that personal idealization of the relations of life that disposes an individual to sacrifice his personal interests for general [interests]—and then it has in mind the realization by the *lud* or in the *lud* of certain ideals of progress, justice, humanity. In the first instance the *lud* appears as the subject of the act; in the second, as its object. In the first instance the act is, so to speak, the work *of the lud* for itself; in the second, it is the work *of someone* for the *lud*.⁷⁹

Więckowski, then, saw Krzywicki’s historical vision as a disempowering narrative that made the *lud* a mere object in a grand project to be realized at some point in the future. Both Krzywicki and Plekhanov, in contrast, would continue to perceive their actions within the boundaries of historical destiny. They would try to apply pressure at the edges of a preordained narrative, shaping it as best they could, trying, perhaps, to hurry it along, but always confident that the future was with them.

While Więckowski was removing the *lud* from Krzywicki’s controversial historical narrative, he was placing it into an ethnographic formation that would prove to be equally rigid. After discussing the *lud* in a series of articles that lasted from June 7 to September 23, 1890, Więckowski ended with a definition: “The *lud* is the national mass of the working classes with the international proletariat at its head.”⁸⁰ He was still close enough to socialism to posit the existence of an “international proletariat,” but he subdivided this amorphous entity into national communities. He wanted to classify people “ac-

⁷⁸ A. Więckowski, “Lud w programach demokratycznych,” *Głos* 5, no. 27 (June 23/July 5, 1890): 323.

⁷⁹ A. Więckowski, “Lud w programach demokratycznych,” *Głos* 5, no. 34 (September 11/23, 1890): 409–11.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

ording to the real characteristics of the individual: . . . ethnographically, according to nationality, and economically, according to class.”⁸¹ In a revealing slip *Głos* once subtly reformulated its slogan about “subordinating” all interests to those of the *lud*, describing its program instead as “recognizing the *lud* as the main element of *national* life.”⁸² At first glance this was nothing new—we have already seen that the *niepokorni* were driven by a desire to restore Poland’s independence, and socialism offered a means of reconciling revolutionary agendas and patriotic goals. But *Głos* was going to put this puzzle together in a new way. Since they had freed themselves to concentrate on the “real” problems of the *lud*, they could focus on its *sociological* rather than *historical* existence. “Realism” did not simply require that people be removed from abstract teleologies; it necessitated that they be reconceptualized within new categories marked by immediate material needs and, more significantly, ethnolinguistic attributes.

Więckowski contrasted his “realistic” definition of the *lud* (as an actually existing ethnographic formation) with the “abstractions” of Krzywicki. But this was still supposed to be a “socialist” argument, as some young authors tried to make clear in 1892 when they founded a short-lived but ideologically significant journal called *Przegląd Socjalistyczny* (The socialist review) in Paris. The magazine’s programmatic statement began with a bit of wishful thinking that was essential to its argument: “[Now that] the working class, emancipated to a large degree from the influence of the socialist intelligentsia, has itself taken control of the movement, the socialist program has come down to a real foundation, aspiring gradually toward the removal of everything that stands outside the sphere of the struggle between labor and capital.” *Przegląd Socjalistyczny* wanted to be a voice for the “real” class struggle, in contrast to the “dogmatic” Marxism of those devoted exclusively to the proletariat and its historical role. In fact, the paper wanted to remove the class struggle entirely from history: “The workers’ party of a given country ought to consider itself to be a part of the international organization of the proletariat, and thus in its ultimate goals aspire to transform the current system; but in its practical, ongoing tasks it [ought not to] go beyond that which directly or indirectly constitutes the needs of the proletariat as a class.”⁸³

But *Przegląd Socjalistyczny* had its own “abstractions,” its own imagined communities. After self-righteously proclaiming their desire to serve the “real” needs of the peasants and workers, the editors proceeded to educate the *lud*

⁸¹ A. Więckowski, “Lud w programach demokratycznych,” *Głos* 5 (July 7/19, 1890): 347–48.

⁸² “Pokrewny prąd,” *Głos* 2 (April 18/30, 1887): 257; emphasis added.

⁸³ “Polskie partje robotnicza i sprawa narodowa,” *Przegląd Socjalistyczny* 1 (October 1892): 1–7.

about the vices of excessive materialism. “The Polish worker,” they wrote, “despite all the duties that are placed upon him by the current class struggle, cannot and should not forget that economic interests are not his only interests, and that, defending these in the class struggle, he ought at the same time to stand in defense of national rights wherever they are trampled.” This was a distinctly national socialism, one that could accommodate both solidarity and class struggle. “The forces in the struggle for independence are not limited to the working class, to that part of society conscious of socialist goals. They include the entire mass of the *ludowe* strata, and that part of our intelligentsia that has nothing in common with the Western ‘bourgeoisie’ and that, while not standing clearly under the socialist banner, in its aspirations has nothing against [socialism].”⁸⁴ Despite all the emphasis on “the proletariat,” *Przegląd Socjalistyczny* returned to the *lud*, defined with amazing breadth so as to include even the intelligentsia. Without the ability to posit the union of all Poles at some point in the postrevolutionary future, it was necessary to insist that the unique situation in Poland (allegedly so unlike “the West”) had created a *ludowa* solidarity in the present. A pseudonymous author (probably Zygmunt Balicki) tried to convince other socialists that this posed no threat to the primacy of class struggle: “Those who fear that the slogan of an autonomous Poland might surrender the socialist movement into the hands of the patriots,” he wrote, “can be assured that any political movement, whatever its tasks, as long as it is based on a separate workers’ party, could never be exploited by anyone except the socialists, because no party except the socialists’ is based on the class struggle.”⁸⁵ The degree to which Balicki would be able to retain his own acceptance of class struggle, however, was now in question. He had taken the first step toward constructing (or imagining) national solidarity in the present, and this would have profound consequences. As we will see, socialists and patriots alike would attempt to impose new forms of order on the disorderly masses during the last decade of the nineteenth century, but the importance and meaning of authority would differ greatly between these two factions of the *niepokorni*. Marxists like Krzywicki could envision national unity under the hegemony of the proletariat in the future; their opponents at *Głos* and *Przegląd Socjalistyczny* had staked their worldview on the existence of national allegiance and cohesion within the actually existing *lud*.⁸⁶ The latter had to believe that the

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ B., “Kilka uwag o kwestyi polskiej w programie politycznym socjalistów,” *Przegląd Socjalistyczny* 4 (1893): 38.

⁸⁶ It is worth noting the timing of these developments. Balicki, Dmowski, Więckowski, Popławski, and the others at *Głos* had made a decisive turn against a dynamic vision of historical time while still firmly in the “revolutionary” camp, before they began formulating the distinctive doctrine of national struggle and ethnic hatred that would later characterize the National Democratic movement. This group’s eventual embrace of a bru-

people's nation existed *now* and that it would be articulated by the people once they were allowed to speak in their own defense and articulate their own political agenda. The actual workers and peasants of Poland, however, were about to disappoint both factions of the *niepokorni*, and when this happened the implications of these alternative visions of the *lud* and the *naród* would become clear.

THE PEOPLE BECOME A MOB

While Polish intellectuals were discussing the *lud* on the pages of their periodicals, the actual peasants and workers were raising their heads and their voices. Throughout the entire decade of the 1870s there were only eighteen strikes in Russian-occupied Poland, but during the 1880s there were more than forty, involving 27,000 workers.⁸⁷ This had nothing to do with the agitation of the intelligentsia: in 1886 the Russian police broke up the only active socialist organization existing at the time, but the number of strikes continued to increase (to seven in 1887 and eleven in 1888, including one in Łódź that mobilized 8,000 workers). One historian has estimated that during the 1880s 18 percent of the Kingdom's factory workers struck at least once.⁸⁸ The most memorable example of "spontaneous" worker protest (an unfortunate expression used then and now to describe any action not directed by intelligentsia revolutionaries) came in 1883, with a strike at the Austrian-owned linen works in the town of Żyrardów, just outside of Warsaw. In response to layoffs and pay cuts, about 180 women walked off the job on April 23; by the next day that number had doubled, and soon the strike encompassed hundreds of women and men. The police moved in, and the resulting confrontation left three strikers dead (including a fifteen-year-old boy) and many more wounded. The workers responded with rioting, which quickly turned into a pogrom against Żyrardów's Jews. Some of the slogans shouted at the time suggest how distant these events were from the world of the intelligentsia. Referring to the Warsaw pogrom of 1881 (which was supported and perhaps partly inspired by the Russian authorities), workers were reported to have complained, "in Warsaw, during the Jewish pogroms, no one shot down the people [i.e., the Polish rioters], but in Żyrardów, when we don't want to work for Germans [i.e., the Austrian

talized version of Social Darwinism was facilitated by their historiosophical position, not the other way around. At its point of origin, this debate over historical determinism was an "internal" argument between Marxist and non-Marxist leftists.

⁸⁷ Buszko, Kołodziejczyk and Michałkiewicz (n. 36 above), pp. 215–20.

⁸⁸ Józef Buszko, Stanisław Michałkiewicz, and Jerzy Myśliński, "Ruch robotniczy w zaborze pruskim i austriackim w latach osiemdziesiątych: Królestwo Polskie po upadku Proletariatu," in Kołodziejczyk, ed. (n. 36 above), p. 387.

factory owners], they kill our brothers and children.”⁸⁹ The Żyrardów strike, with its fascinating intersection of gender, class, nation, and race, deserves an article of its own, but for now I only want to note the vast gap between these “spontaneous” acts of violent protest and *any* of the rhetorical alternatives available to the intelligentsia. When writers and political activists tried to assign agency to the *lud*, they invariably confronted this gap, and the resulting dilemma provoked the most important crisis of political thought in the age of modernization. What could a democratic intellectual do when “the people” became “a mob”?

Both the orthodox Marxists and the heterodox contributors to *Głos* wanted to grant the power of agency to the *lud*, but both would retreat before the sight of a “mob” that did not share their objectives or ideals. The socialists had to confront these tensions shortly after the Żyrardów incident, when rising unemployment ignited “spontaneous” social unrest in Warsaw in 1885. Throughout February of that year there were almost daily confrontations between roving bands of jobless workers and the police, culminating in a huge March 2 demonstration on Castle Square. A petition for the Russian governor-general was prepared, but when the protestors tried to deliver it, the police intervened, arresting 146 people. Significantly, this event is missing from most of the narratives of the late nineteenth century. Socialist historians would later refer to the May Day demonstrations of 1890 as the first major sign of public action in three decades, while nationalist scholars pointed to the May 3 protests of 1891; neither group would claim the events of March 1885 within their tradition. At the time, some socialist intellectuals even scolded the workers for staging a protest that had no chance of accomplishing anything.⁹⁰ Significantly, the only intellectual directly engaged with the crowd on Castle Square that day was a Serbian revolutionary named Ander Banković, who just happened to be in Warsaw at the time.

Against the backdrop of events like this, socialist intellectuals began emphasizing that infamous phrase, “the dictatorship of the proletariat.” This was not, as an author in the émigré periodical *Walka Klas* (Class struggle) recognized in 1884, “a democratic expression,” but it was nonetheless a crucial part of socialist teaching. The idea of dictatorship, he wrote, had a dual meaning: on the one hand, it referred to the need for the working class to “enclose entirely the arena for the formation of social relations” so that reactionary forces could not turn

⁸⁹ On the Żyrardów strike, see Naimark (n. 36 above), pp. 139–41. Reginald E. Zelnik has described in detail another “spontaneous” strike (i.e., one not managed by intelligentsia activists) in his recent book, *Law and Disorder on the Narova River: The Kreenholm Strike of 1872* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1995).

⁹⁰ Naimark, pp. 142–44, 151.

back the revolutionary tide; on the other hand (and more important), this was a dictatorship of the radical intelligentsia over the “unconscious” masses. “In order to have such strength,” this author wrote, the working class “must be organized and conscious of its interests.”⁹¹ *Walka Klas* had no doubts regarding who would do this “organizing,” who would be responsible for imbuing the workers with this “consciousness.” “The initiative of introducing to our social life the aspiration to social revolution,” the magazine preached, “belongs to our revolutionary intelligentsia. . . . Gifted with stronger initiative, possessing a broader social morality, it will, together with that kernel of a worker’s organization, be able to be a sort of moral leader for the entire movement.”⁹²

An anonymous socialist later recalled that the situation in the Kingdom in the early 1890s was ripe for revolution. “It would have been possible to create a more serious organization,” he wrote, “were it not for the lack of intellectuals/agitators.”⁹³ This last phrase—agitators—brings us to the fundamental distinction between the socialist effort to give order to the people *in time* and the nationalist dream of establishing order *in social space*. Like all the activists of his generation, this author wanted to give order to the new politics of the 1890s, but his imagined organization would always be destabilized by the concept of “agitation.” The socialists dreamed of a chiliastic moment of salvation, a revolution that would overturn the entire world and bring a new dawn, and they positioned their imagined social unity within this utopia. Their vision of revolution implied a moment of disorder, chaos, and systemic destruction—to be followed, of course, by the construction of the new socialist order. This eschatological dream determined how the socialists approached the concept of organization and how they acted to shape the emerging forms of mass politics. Like all underground opposition groups, the socialists were concerned with the institutional structure of their movement, but they had no need to discuss in advance (i.e., before the revolution) the organization of society (thus the infamous vagueness of nineteenth-century Marxist thought regarding the post-revolutionary world). The socialist Adam Prochnik explained the distinction between propaganda and (as he put it) “politics”:

⁹¹ Untitled, *Walka Klas* 2 (June 1884), in Alina Molska, ed., *Pierwsze pokolenie marksistów polskich: Wybór pism i materiałów źródłowych z lat 1878–1886*, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1962), 2:348.

⁹² “Słowo wstępne,” *Walka Klas* 1 (May 1884), in Molska, ed., 2:25–61. For a revealing recapitulation of this argument from an official communist historian, see Jan Kancewicz, *Rozłam w polskim ruchu robotniczym na początku lat dziewięćdziesiątych XIX wieku* (Warsaw, 1961), p. 4.

⁹³ sp., “Wspomnienia z dwóch lat (1892–1893)” (n. 67 above), p. 30. On the desire among socialists to oppose “spontaneity,” see Anna Żarnowska, “Rewolucja 1905–1907 a kultura polityczna robotników,” in Żarnowska and Wolsza, eds. (n. 1 above), p. 25.

As long as the capitalist system was criticized and socialism was derived from its foundations, we remained on scientific, reasoned, rationalistic ground. However, whenever we reached toward the past [or] whenever we penetrated into the sphere of social revolution, we found ourselves at once on metaphysical ground. We imagined social revolution as a transcendent phenomenon, as a great elemental change, the foundations of which we did not know, and did not know how to find. . . . Since, therefore, all those social changes would be the mere result of that great transformation—social revolution—there was no need to conduct a political struggle. . . . It was only necessary to prepare as many talented people as possible to accept socialism. The greatest necessity, therefore, seemed to be not political struggle but propaganda, preparatory work.⁹⁴

Once Prochnik accepted the inevitability of the great moment of salvation, he was driven to “agitate” and spread “propaganda,” to foment unrest so as to hasten the day of transformation. The *raison d'être* of a socialist party in a capitalist world was disruption, division, and discord, which would allow the PPS to attract an enormous following during the chaotic months of insurrection in 1905. Indeed, the PPS helped spark the events of that year by deliberately provoking a violent confrontation between the police and a protesting crowd. Even if they did not bring about *the* revolution, they accomplished an important goal: as Robert Blobaum has put it, they “contributed to the creation of an atmosphere charged with confrontation.”⁹⁵ This was precisely what they wanted: to heighten the “class contradictions” of Polish society, to sow unrest, to hasten the apocalypse. Within their narrative of rupture and utopia, the liberation of the *lud* and the *naród* alike could come only after passing through the storm of social conflict. As the socialists participated in the ordering of mass politics, they were compelled to retain wide spaces for disorder.

Despite the injunctions from Popławski, Balicki, and Więckowski cited above, the tendency to position the intelligentsia as the *lud*'s “older brother” became just as common on the pages of *Głos* as in *Walka Klas*. This was a nearly universal response to the frustration of those who wanted to empower the *lud*, only to find that the actual workers or peasants would not behave as predicted. The concept of the *lud* provided the Polish intelligentsia with a way to embody their social imaginings, to (as one of them put it) “clothe the national spirit in the body of fact” and “turn the word into flesh.”⁹⁶ If we understand the fin de siècle fascination with “the people” in this context, we can hardly be surprised that it was difficult for them to listen to the unmediated voice of the people. The “national spirit” could not get *too* mired in its “body

⁹⁴ Adam Prochnik, “Ideologia ‘Proletariatu,’” *Kronika Ruchu Rewolucyjnego w Polsce* 2 (January/February/March 1936): 2.

⁹⁵ Blobaum, *Rewolucja* (n. 4 above), p. 51.

⁹⁶ Zygmunt Wasilewski, “Jan Ludwik Popławski: Szkic wizerunku,” in *Pisma polityczne*, by Popławski (n. 23 above), p. xxxv.

of fact,” lest the *lud* challenge the intelligentsia’s ideals. But the form of elite leadership would differ significantly between those who imagined themselves within a historical teleology and those who could perceive only synchronic social space. The PPS talked about the dictatorship of (and, implicitly, over) the proletariat, but their eschatological worldview allowed them to retain a message of subversion and disorder. In contrast, the National League, with its roots in *Głos*’s repudiation of “abstract” visions of the future, found it difficult to tolerate any diversity or division within a community that existed in the present. The nation, as imagined by the members of the National League, eventually became a site for talking about authority, discipline, and power, and the *lud* had to be reconceptualized and defined with more precision so as to support, rather than subvert, organization. The result was a discursive framework that allowed Polish nationalists to claim a popular foundation while at the same time facilitating control over the peasants and workers as these “masses” were being drawn into the political process. William Hagen, commenting on National Democratic politics after the turn of the century, has written that the *Endecja* wanted “to heighten . . . both the common people’s national loyalty and their acceptance of upper-class leadership.”⁹⁷ By 1905 this did indeed seem to be the case. All discussions of class struggle were eventually banished from the pages of National Democratic publications, leaving space only for the “duty” of the workers and peasants to subordinate their own needs to a higher cause and to obey the leadership of their betters. Insofar as any “particularism” was allowed to exist within the nation, it was carefully contained and disarmed.

The National League was a small conspiratorial organization when it was founded in 1892, but it gradually grew to rival the PPS. The league itself had only 350 members in 1904, but it served as the secretive center of a much broader network of illegal nationalist institutions. These included the National Democratic Party (or “ND,” thus “*Endecja*”), the Publishing Society (located in Galicia—the only place the movement was able to publish anything legally), the Union of Polish Youth (*Zet*), the *Collegium Secretum* for priests, and above all the Society for National Education (which reached countless thousands of peasants through its literacy campaigns). By the turn of the century the league’s organ, *Przegląd Wszechpolski* (The all-Poland review), was one of the most influential opposition papers, providing material for a number of more specialized publications, including *Pochodnia* (a paper focused on the special concerns of the Russian partition), *Teka* (for students), and especially *Polak* (a tabloid for peasants). During the years discussed in this article, the league concentrated its efforts on the Russian partition (despite its “all-Poland” rhetoric). The first National League cell in Poznań was not founded until 1899, and as

⁹⁷ William W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles, and Jews: The Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East, 1772–1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 239.

late as 1903 there were only twenty members in the entire German partition. For several years the only National Democrats in Galicia were exiles from the Kingdom, and a specific “Galician Branch” of the “Democratic National Party” had its first (small) meeting only in 1903. But the movement grew quickly, and when a legal political space was created in the Kingdom after 1905, the *Endecja* was immediately one of the leading forces in public life. By 1914 the movement had spread outside the Russian partition, and even in the once neglected Poznań the *Endecja* enjoyed a prominent, albeit not dominant, position. The *Endecja* came to enjoy widespread popular support (among workers and peasants as well as among intellectuals and the petit bourgeoisie), even as the movement preached its message of order and obedience. This might seem paradoxical, but in fact it reflects the *Endecja*’s distinctly “modern” blend of democracy and discipline.⁹⁸

The first issue of *Pochodnia* opened with a call for populist action: “So, on your feet, anyone who is alive! Get to work with the *lud* and among the *lud*.”⁹⁹ But such work rested on a problematic assumption. Popławski wrote in 1900 that “in our program the national and democratic tendencies flow together in one organic whole,” and the 1903 program of the Democratic National Party (the adjectives would be inverted a few years later) declared that “the interests of the *lud* . . . are today, in all respects, equivalent with the interests of the nation. . . . As a result of combining, in the current historical period, the interests of the national whole with the social elevation of the *ludowe* strata, the

⁹⁸ For National League membership figures, see Kozicki, *Historia Ligi Narodowej* (n. 18 above), pp. 569–88. On the many affiliates of the National League, see *ibid.*, pp. 95–99; Toporowski (n. 18 above), pp. 333–45; and Roman Wapiński, *Narodowa Demokracja, 1893–1939* (Wrocław, 1980), pp. 64–72. On the National League press, see Roman Dmowski, *Polityka polska i odbudowanie państwa* (Warsaw, 1988), p. 52, “Relacja Romana Dmowskiego” (n. 40 above), pp. 427–28; Urszula Jakubowska, *Prasa narodowej demokracji w dobie zaborów* (Warsaw, 1988); Klaudiusz Hrabek, *Ideologia ‘Przeglądu Wszepolskiego’ (1895–1905)* (Poznań, 1937); Kmieciak, “Prasa polska” (n. 18 above), pp. 56–57; Jerzy Myśliński, “Prasa wydawana przez Ligę Narodową w Krakowie przed 1905 rokiem,” *Rocznik Historii Czasopiśmiennictwa Polskiego* 2 (1963): 32–56; Piotr Panek, untitled memoir (Archiwum PAN w Warszawie, Teka Stanisława Kozickiego, sygn. 30, jednostek 3), pp. 121–26; Wiesław Piatkowski, “Idee społeczno-polityczne ‘Polaka’ (1896–1906): Przyczynek do kształtowania się ideologii Narodowej Demokracji,” *Rocznik Historii Czasopiśmiennictwa Polskiego* 5 (1966): 45–65; Roman Wapiński, “Przegląd Wszepolski,” in *Na warsztatach historyków polskiej myśli politycznej*, ed. Henryk Zieliński (Wrocław, 1980), p. 84; Zygmunt Wasilewski, “Podróże Dmowskiego (przyczynek biograficzny),” in *Roman Dmowski: Przyczynki-przemówienia* (Poznań, n.d.), pp. 73–74; K. Wojnar, “Ze wspomnień i przeżyć, 1888–1908,” *Niepodległość* 18 (1938): 379–457. On the *Endecja*’s presence in (and effect on) Poznań, see Hagen, pp. 232–57; and Jerzy Marczewski, *Narodowa Demokracja w Poznańskim, 1900–1914* (Warsaw, 1967).

⁹⁹ “Świt,” *Pochodnia* 1 (March 1899): 1–2.

national position of the party and its democracy are joined tightly together, constituting a single, inseparable programmatic principle.”¹⁰⁰ But what if the workers and peasants did not agree that their interests were “equivalent with the interests of the nation” *today*? What if some of “the people” were drawn more to a “cosmopolitan” socialism? What if some considered the cause of social justice (however they understood that phrase) to be more important than national unity “in the current historical period”? The National Democrats would soon recognize that this was, in fact, the case. Despite all their optimistic assertions that their program was truly “popular,” they realized that the national unity of which they dreamed did not exist “today.”

And as they approached the twentieth century, the National Democrats became increasingly convinced that such unity *had* to exist if the nation were to survive. In 1896 the editors of *Polak*, the National Democrats’ peasant tabloid, offered a startling new justification for their populist agenda. Repeating an old theme, they complained about the gross inequalities and injustices that characterized the social structure in the countryside and called for measures to bring liberty and prosperity to the peasants. Then, in an unexpected move, they defended this agenda by arguing that greater equality would ensure that “we will have order among ourselves and strength for the struggle with [our] enemies.”¹⁰¹ No longer were the peasants to be helped for their own sake; now they were to be aided so as to fortify the nation in its battle with a variety of “enemies.” Over the coming years this emphasis on conflict became increasingly important, as the *Endecja* grew ever more preoccupied with a brutalized version of “the struggle for survival.” This Spencerian slogan had first appeared in the writings of liberals in the 1860s, but only in a softened form that emphasized commercial and “intellectual” competition rather than war and conquest. Moreover, this earlier configuration of the *bellum omnium contra omnes* had been embedded in yet another historiosophical vision, one that promised evolution toward a liberal utopia of industry, individual liberty, and secular rationality. Conflict was cast as the engine of history, but violence was sure to be transcended as humanity evolved toward “civilization.” As I have argued elsewhere, the progressive imagination of Polish liberals allowed them to talk about “struggle” without facing the dangerous, violent implications of the Spencerian worldview.¹⁰²

But the young “patriots” who were to constitute the leadership of the National Democratic movement had already repudiated such historiosophical op-

¹⁰⁰ [Jan Ludwik Popławski], “Nasz demokratyzm,” *Przegląd Wszepocholski*, vol. 6 (March 1900), in Popławski’s *Pisma polityczne*, 1:102; “Program stronnictwa demokratyczno-narodowego w zaborze rosyjskim,” *Przegląd Wszepocholski* 9 (October 1903): 721–57.

¹⁰¹ Wojciech Grochowski, “O gospodarce narodowej,” *Polak* 1 (December 1896): 6.

¹⁰² See Porter, “The Social Nation” (n. 31 above), pp. 1482–92.

timism, in the name of the “real” needs of the *lud*. Their turn away from a dynamic conception of time involved more than just a rejection of socialism; it was equally rooted in their contempt for the liberalism of the established Warsaw press. They lost faith in the Spencerian prophesies about a future of peaceful industrial competition, just as they discarded the alternative socialist prophesies about a future of peaceful communal harmony. As a result, the violent implications of “the struggle for survival” (which Herbert Spencer himself had tried to suppress) burst forth. Not being able to believe in progress, the Endecja could only imagine a world filled with unending, irredeemable brutality, violence, and conquest. The implications for the nation were clear: it must fight or be destroyed. As Balicki put it, “Only a nation with a strong individuality, able to fight for and win its [independence], able to oppose force with force, avenge the wrongs it has endured and ensure for itself the superiority of justice, has the right to independent existence.”¹⁰³ In Dmowski’s stark prose: “In relations with other nations, there is neither right nor wrong; there is only strength and weakness.”¹⁰⁴ And “strength” required order and organization.

In 1897 the editors of *Polak* offered a definition of a word that they assumed their peasant readers did not know: “democracy.” Significantly, they located this vocabulary lesson within a conversation between Jan and Mateusz, two fictional peasants who had an ongoing discussion on the pages of *Polak*. Jan asked his friend the crucial question, “Just what is democracy?” Mateusz responded that it was something that existed in other European countries, where a parliament elected by “the nation” controlled the government. Within such a system, the *lud*—if it were “enlightened” [*oświecony*] and if it “understood its own affairs”—would elect delegates who would defend its interests. Those who represented the people in parliament were, in turn, called “democrats.” And what could a democrat do in the “Muscovite” system, where there was no parliament? “He gives the *lud* books and newspapers, enlightens [the *lud*] about its situation, attempts to get closer to the peasants, to give them advice and help.” Even a peasant or a worker could stand alongside “people from the educated class” and fight with them “as one army” for the cause of democracy, assuming that he had been “enlightened.”¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Zygmunt Balicki, *Egoizm narodowy wobec etyki* (1902; 3d ed., Lwów, 1914), pp. 68, 72–73.

¹⁰⁴ Roman Dmowski, *Myśli nowoczesnego polaka*, 7th ed. (London, 1953), p. 14. For more on the Endecja’s concept of struggle, see my article, “Who Is a Pole and Where Is Poland? Territory and Nation in the Rhetoric of Polish National Democracy before 1905,” *Slavic Review* 51 (Winter 1992): 639–53.

¹⁰⁵ [Roman Dmowski], “Gawędy sąsiedzkie II,” *Polak* 2 (December 1897): 180–81. See also “Odezwa Ligi Narodowej,” *Polak* 4 (January 1900): 2–4; W. Z., “O różnych formach rządu,” *Polak* 3 (September 1898): 124–26. The conversations between Jan and Mateusz were reprinted as a separate volume: *Gawędy sąsiedzkie* (Kraków, 1900).

And what was “enlightenment”? Mateusz defined this term later, in a manner typical of the *Endecja*. The use of this word was not, as it may seem, an evocation of the traditional liberal demand for an indirect democracy, in which only the literate or educated would be enfranchised—the National Democrats were certainly not liberals, by any definition. Instead, “education” or “enlightenment” (these terms are etymologically linked in Polish) was attained when the peasants understood their national identity and realized that the Tsar was not their rightful leader. The peasants needed to “destroy ignorance [*ciemnota*, darkness] and establish education, a true Polish education,” which would teach people that “things go better for those nations that have their own national government.”¹⁰⁶ In other words, the “educated” peasant would recognize authority *within* his national community, rather than outside of it. The call to democracy became a means of locating “the people” under a “national government,” subject to new hierarchies.

Within this framework, the task of the Polish patriot was not to work *with* the people but to struggle with the Russians *over* the people. In 1899 a pamphlet signed by the Central Committee of the National League proclaimed that “the struggle with the Russian government and its allies in our society has become ever more clearly a struggle for the Polish *lud*, for influence on it, for its soul.”¹⁰⁷ The *lud* was no longer the active subject of history; it had been transformed into a blank social space that had to be filled with Polish national consciousness. The National Democrats recognized that the peasants did not necessarily consider themselves Polish, at least not in any politicized sense. Of course, even the most isolated villagers would have perceived some sort of ethnolinguistic difference between themselves and their Ukrainian-, Lithuanian-, Belorusan-, German-, or Yiddish-speaking neighbors, but it did not follow from this that they aspired to an independent Poland or that they perceived any link between their personal well-being and the creation of a Polish state. This sort of national unity, this sort of linkage between *lud* and *naród*, did not exist, and the National Democrats consistently rejected any teleology—any “abstractions”—that would promise such a bond in a postrevolutionary future. They would, therefore, have to create national unity actively in the present. But this objective raised a dilemma: how could a sense of unity be fostered in a world with so many inequalities and injustices? The nationalists

¹⁰⁶ [Roman Dmowski], “Gawędy sąsiedzkie IV,” *Polak* 4 (December 1900): 153–55.

¹⁰⁷ Komitet Centralny Ligi Narodowej, “Odezwa,” Warsaw, December 8, 1899 (BN DŹS, Teka IB13). This text is also preserved in the Archiwum PAN w Krakowie, Teka Józefa Zielińskiego, sygn. 7782, and was reprinted at the time in *Teka* 2 (January 1900): 14. For a similar formulation of the *Endecja*’s goals at the time, see “Liga Narodowa,” *Przegląd Wszechpolski* 6 (January 1900): 5. For another discussion of this triangular dynamic between the Russian authorities, the Polish intelligentsia, and the *lud*, see “Kuratorya trzeźwości,” *Pochodnia* 1 (May 1899): 1–2.

had lost their faith in history, and they could not wait for the socialist dream of revolution, so they worked to suppress the political significance of poverty and powerlessness, lest such disruptions weaken the cohesion of their imagined community.

In 1895, when he was still a member of both the National League and the PPS, Zygmunt Balicki visited the United States. On his return he issued a report to the Union of Polish Socialists Abroad (the émigré branch of the PPS) describing the relatively good pay, status, and working conditions enjoyed by Polish workers in the United States. Did it follow from this, asked Balicki rhetorically, that socialism has no future in America? Not at all. The only ones who could think such a thing were those who based their views “*exclusively* on personal-class egoism, on the fermentation of dissatisfaction. . . . Those, however, for whom socialism is above all a higher form of social organization, the ideal of the working class, and not a ‘good deal’ for the stratum of factory workers; [those, for whom socialism is] the most intense expression of political freedom, progress, and democracy, and not a partisan monopoly on those slogans; these people will find [in the United States] a wide and grateful field for work and influence.” For the Balicki of 1895—in sharp contrast to the Balicki of the 1886 article, “Democracy and Liberalism”¹⁰⁸—the material concerns of the workers were not as important as the political organization of the *lud*. “One should not spread propaganda (especially negative propaganda),” Balicki continued, “but above all organize; when influencing the masses one should not play off of their egoism, but off of their communal, social, and national feeling.”¹⁰⁹ The material needs of the workers were described in this text as expressions of “egoism” that must not be provoked, lest they weaken the force of “communal, social, and national feeling.”

In a fascinating transitional text from 1898 called *Critical Observations on Contemporary Socialism*, Balicki more explicitly traced his movement away from the socialist eschatology toward a dehistoricized commitment to unity in the present. He still claimed to believe in a future of “self-generated initiative, cooperation, and social organization,” “the elimination of all forms of class system,” and the “erection of new arrangements based on solidarity.” However, he no longer cast this familiar utopia as the product of a revolutionary transcendence. It was, instead, something that the proletariat had to create today. The workers had to become “quintessentially national,” building the classless society not by fighting for their own hegemony but by voluntarily subordinating their own needs to the common good. Class consciousness, for Balicki, was a destructive force when it “measured everything by its own standards” and

¹⁰⁸ See n. 53 above.

¹⁰⁹ Zygmunt Balicki, “Sprawozdanie Zygmunta Balickiego, złożone Centralizacji Związku Zagranicznego Socjalistów Polskich,” *Niepodległość* 7, no. 16 (1933): 282–83.

“recognized the common needs of the totality of society in its entirety only insofar as it suited its special needs.” Balicki would oppose any attempt to place “class interests above the welfare and interests of the nation.” He was willing to recognize the “reality of class,” but he would not allow it to take precedence over the nation.¹¹⁰

The Endecja’s goal, Balicki stated explicitly in 1903, was to persuade the peasants to stop troubling the landowners over mere “economic antagonisms” and turn instead “against the Russian invaders, in the name of Poland.”¹¹¹ In that same year the party program attacked the “divisive foreign influences” that were working exclusively for “increasing [the proletariat’s] earnings or decreasing its working hours—more urgent today is work on the toiling masses to insure that increasing wages and hours of rest . . . will be used to elevate [the workers] to a higher level of human existence.” Not surprisingly, this “higher level” entailed a “development of national feeling” and a “sense of union with all of society,” so that the workers would no longer be vulnerable to “the slogans of class struggle and the international unity of the proletariat.”¹¹² An 1899 essay in *Pochodnia* argued that strikes were only appropriate when they were directed against a foreign government. The same sort of industrial action would not be right if aimed at *Polish* factory owners because this would undermine national unity. Moreover, after the attainment of national independence, this anonymous author predicted, any such expressions of labor unrest would be unnecessary because “we workers” will be able to “talk with the factory owners” and avoid all conflict.¹¹³

The National Democrats did not oppose the labor movement as such, assuming that it was possible to separate it from the “universal ambitions” of socialism (as *Przegląd Wszepolski* wrote) and use it as a tool to bring order to the working class.¹¹⁴ The Endecja tried to accomplish this by forming the Narodowy Związek Robotniczy (NZR, the National Worker’s Union). One NZR manifesto proclaimed that the group would welcome all those who wanted to work “for the good of all Poland and the concerns of the workers” (most emphatically in that order). All members of the union, the text declared (in a revealing play on the old slogan of *Głos*) had to “subordinate their own inter-

¹¹⁰ B. Ostoja [Zygmunt Balicki], *Uwagi krytyczne nad socjalizmem współczesnym* (Lwów, 1898). This was originally published in the short-lived National Democratic quarterly, *Kwartalnik Naukowo-Polityczny i Społeczny* 1 (1898): 60–91.

¹¹¹ B. Ostoja [Zygmunt Balicki], “Powrotna fala kosmopolityzmu,” *Przegląd Wszepolski* 2 (February 1903): 95.

¹¹² “Program Stronnictwa Demokratyczno-Narodowego w zaborze rosyjskim,” *Przegląd Wszepolski* 9 (October 1903): 745–48.

¹¹³ “Ostatnie bezrobocie,” *Pochodnia* 4 (October 1899): 2.

¹¹⁴ Bolesław Nidzicki, “Polityka ekonomiczna demokracji narodowej,” *Przegląd Wszepolski* 9 (February 1903): 107.

ests to the needs of the nation.”¹¹⁵ As a National Democratic economist explained, the purpose of a union was not to “defend labor against the exploitation of capital” but to create institutional structures to better organize production and conflict resolution. “The most universal tendency of our time,” this author wrote, “is to assign the state the role of the guardian of the working class and the highest mediator in the bargaining between labor and capital.”¹¹⁶ “Coordination” would become a mantra in the Endecja’s discussions of the economy. In 1903, Piotr Panek’s book, *The Principles of National Economy*, argued that in any well-functioning economy there had to be a clear and strict hierarchy of authority, so as to ensure such coordination. “There must be someone who directs the work,” he wrote, “there must be someone who distributes work to everyone and supervises its execution.” A basic national goal, therefore, must be the cultivation of “directors,” until the time came when the workers themselves were so well disciplined that they did not need strict supervision. Panek added that strikes were always and everywhere harmful “because they halt, for some time, productivity.”¹¹⁷

The National League explained in 1900, “If we step forth as a party, it is not because we represent the interests of one stratum, but because . . . we consider organizing the popular masses for political life to be the most important task of national politics.”¹¹⁸ The Endecja still claimed the mantle of “democracy,” but they did so by conceptualizing the cause of the people as a tactical maneuver aimed at strengthening the nation. In the program of the Democratic-National party for 1897, Popławski reformulated the old slogan of *Głos*, now heavily qualified so as to justify it as a national program. The National Democrats believed, Popławski wrote, “that in today’s system of social and political relations the general interests of the people are equal to the interests of the nation. We therefore place first in our social aspirations the spiritual and material interests of the popular strata, subordinating where necessary the interests of other strata.”¹¹⁹ The issue was no longer the oppression of the people, but

¹¹⁵ Narodowy Związek Robotnicy: Regulamin Narodowego Kola Robotniczego (n.d., BN DŹS, Teka IB).

¹¹⁶ Bolesław Nidzicki, “Polityka ekonomiczna demokracji IV,” *Przegląd Wszechpolski* 9 (May 1903): 350.

¹¹⁷ Piotr Panek, *Zasady gospodarki narodowej* (Lwów, 1903), p. 15.

¹¹⁸ Komitet Centralny Liga Narodowej, “Odezwa,” *Teka* 2 (January 1900): 18. This text simultaneously appeared as “Liga Narodowa,” *Przegląd Wszechpolski* 6 (January 1900): 7.

¹¹⁹ [Jan Ludwik Popławski], “Program Stronnictwa Demokratyczno-Narodowego w zaborze rosyjskim,” *Przegląd Wszechpolski* 3 (June 1, 1897): 243; emphasis added. A year later this same document was serialized in *Polak* as “Polityka polska pod panowaniem moskiewskim (Program Stronnictwa Demokratyczno-Narodowego),” *Polak*, vol. 3 (February–July 1898). See also the instrumental way the *lud* is discussed in “Sprawozdanie z działalności Ligi w r. 1895/96,” in “Do historii Ligi Narodowej II,” ed. Władysław

the *usefulness* of the people to the national cause. This was put even more clearly in the party's 1903 program: "The *lud* must become strong economically and culturally, a politically active social element, so that the nation as a whole can follow others in progress and effectively defend its interests."¹²⁰

It was not enough, however, just to assert that the needs of the nation superseded the needs of any specific social agenda: words alone would not create that sort of unity. A National Democratic pamphlet from 1899 declared that "the nation . . . must keep its public life under the restraint of an organization, open or secret, capable of directing the totality of its aspirations and efforts, and aiming persistently toward the attainment of the goal. The strength of the nation, just like the strength of a state, rests in its organization."¹²¹ All illegal groups in tsarist Russia had to follow strict codes of secrecy and discipline, but the National Democrats did not justify their authoritarian stance as a mere tactical necessity. As workers and peasants became more and more involved in public life in Poland around the turn of the century, the *Endecja* became increasingly preoccupied with social discipline; as it became evident that the National Democrats' imagined national unity did not exist, they had to expend ever more effort to create it.

The conservative writer Erazm Piltz complained that the *Endecja* was not just another political party but was instead trying to become an underground national government.¹²² Even though the National Democrats sometimes denied that they had such aspirations, Helena Ceysingerówna, an activist in the movement, wrote later that the league wanted to create "a sort of superstructure that . . . could replace to a certain degree the most important aspects of [the nation's] own statehood."¹²³ The 1903 program of the Democratic National Party proclaimed its intent to assume the "functions of a Polish state" and to exert "the strongest possible influence on society . . . making the willful action of individuals impossible."¹²⁴ In fact, the activities of the National League were aimed neither at preparing for an uprising (they considered this dangerously premature) nor at the more mundane goal of propagating national identity.

Pobóg-Malinowski, in *Niepodległość* 7 (1933): 272–73. The original of this document no longer exists, but copies can be found in the Archiwum PAN w Krakowie, Teka Zielińskiego, sygn. 7783.

¹²⁰ "Program Stronnictwa Demokratyczno-Narodowego" (n. 112 above), p. 727; emphasis added.

¹²¹ Komitet Centralny Ligi Narodowej (n. 107 above).

¹²² Piltz, *Nasze stronnictwa skrajne* (n. 14 above), p. 165.

¹²³ Helena Ceysingerówna, "Liga Narodowa i Związek Unarodowienia Szkół w walce o szkołę polską," in Nawroczyński, ed. (n. 41 above), p. 4. See also Stanisław Kozicki, "Pamiętniki," vol. 1, "1875–1914" (Archiwum Historii Ruchu Ludowego, sygn. P-127), p. 132.

¹²⁴ "Program Stronnictwa Demokratyczno-Narodowego" (n. 112 above), pp. 722, 739.

Rather, they wanted to organize the nation, to turn the Polish population into a “self-conscious,” cohesive entity, under the leadership of the Endecja. One member recalled that on joining the league he was instructed to “attain influence on society” by “organizing society into legal, cultural, and economic institutions” and then to take over the leadership of those institutions.¹²⁵ *Pochodnia* criticized those who engaged in any social work outside the institutional framework of the National League. To work for the Red Cross—not to mention any state-run institutions—was proof of “naïveté” and “the collapse of political thinking.” Such groups, the magazine claimed, were part of a plot by the Russian government to “deprive us of the unity of opinions, bring out different viewpoints, deprive us of unanimity.” There could be but one solution to such a crisis: “For this it is necessary [to create] an organ, a machine working quietly and effectively, the commands of which must be obligatory for all. Today such an organ, such a moral government, is the National League, and its point of view, its tactics, its position must be unconditionally obligatory for all. . . . Today there is no social work here that can be conducted without us or alongside us.”¹²⁶

Roman Dmowski explained the need for discipline in 1903: “The only salvation for us is to stop being an incoherent, loose mob and to change into a strongly organized, disciplined army. While a mob reacts directly to all pleasant or unpleasant agitation and thus becomes a toy in the hands of skillful politicians standing at the helm of a government, an army will advance in a defined direction in accordance with an order derived from a considered, critically examined plan of political action. . . . Such an army, thanks to the development of the National League, is being steadily created.”¹²⁷ The military metaphor used here was common in National Democratic rhetoric. Balicki once declared at an émigré ceremony in Geneva, “Only a nation organized into a fighting army of progress, enlivened by a great idea, disciplined like an old infantry battalion, and capable of striking with the tempest of revolution—only such a nation can count on its future and be certain of its victory—such a nation is already free, even if it is enslaved.”¹²⁸ The programmatic statement for *Teka* promised “to create among [the youth] a strong, and (insofar as possible) an organized whole—a disciplined army that they cannot dissolve. . . . Arming the soldier, it is still necessary to teach him to maneuver in accordance

¹²⁵ Michał Terech, no title, no date (Archiwum PAN w Warszawie, Teka Stanisława Kozickiego, sygn. 30, jednostek 3), p. 202. A copy of this text is also preserved in the Archiwum PAN w Krakowie, Teka Zielińskiego, sygn. 7785, vol. 7.

¹²⁶ Untitled, *Pochodnia* 2 (May 1900): 1–2.

¹²⁷ [Dmowski], “Walka o prawo i organizacja narodowa” (n. 1 above), pp. 342–43.

¹²⁸ Balicki, “Genewa, 30 listopada 1892” (n. 54 above), p. 3.

with his unit—it is necessary to create an army. We have written a lot about organization. It alone can teach order, discipline, and precision.”¹²⁹

Dmowski, in a 1904 article entitled “The Organization of Opinion,” wrote that the National League deserved credit for “crystallizing opinion” in Poland. He attributed the growing authority of the *Endecja* to the ability of the movement to “guarantee obedience” among the “undisciplined elements” of society.¹³⁰ A report from the National League to some financial supporters repeated this goal (exaggerating wildly how close it was to realization). People in the Kingdom, the report stated, “have begun to look on the league as the only element of leadership, as the only internal authority able to hold the youth in check, capable not only of calling forth a movement but also of directing it and stopping it, if necessary. As a result of this the organizational authority [of the league] and its appeal has grown considerably.”¹³¹ The league, Dmowski wrote elsewhere, was an “organization of national work” that tried to educate the masses and defend their interests, but above all it was designed to “direct public opinion and [to] be in turn its reflection.” The degree to which Dmowski was willing to “reflect” any opinion other than his own, however, was revealed when he added that the *Endecja* would represent the public “only insofar as that opinion is an expression of healthy national instincts.”¹³² Not surprisingly, those “healthy instincts” were to be determined by Roman Dmowski and the National Democrats. They would build a “national program,” *Teka* promised, that would “bind more strongly than ever, than anywhere on earth, all thoughts, desires, and feelings of all strata of the nation into one feeling.” Even if debate and division was appropriate in other societies, such things could not be permitted in Poland. “The existence of such contradictions among us demonstrates only a lack of love and devotion for the one, great idea of regaining independence, which, after all, drives us all.”¹³³

Although this emphasis on “organization” was established well before 1905, this year of the revolution brought the specter of social unrest before the eyes of the National Democrats as never before, seeming to confirm their worst fears of disorder. As a result, the rhetoric of discipline and authority became sharper than ever, and whatever democratic pretensions the movement still had

¹²⁹ “Nasze drogi,” *Teka* 3 (January 1901): 2–3. See also “Do wojska!” *Teka* 5 (January 1903): 3–5.

¹³⁰ [Roman Dmowski], “Organizacja opinii,” *Przegląd Wszechpolski* 10 (April 1904), in Dmowski, *Pisma*, pp. 203–4.

¹³¹ “Sprawozdanie za rok 1901–1902: Komitet Centralny Ligi Narodowej do Komisji Nadzorczej Skarbu Narodowego Polskiego” (July 24, 1902), in “Do historii Ligi Narodowej,” *Niepodległość* 9 (1934): 294–95.

¹³² [Roman Dmowski], “Anachronizm polityczny,” *Przegląd Wszechpolski* 10 (July 1904), in Dmowski, *Pisma*, p. 195.

¹³³ “Polskość naszego programu,” *Teka* 3 (October 1901): 401–3.

were finally jettisoned. The National Democrats came to see the workers and the peasants themselves as the main threat to Poland because they were trying to assert their own class interests above those of the national whole.¹³⁴ This struggle against “the mob” pushed the National Democrats to repudiate nearly all forms of participatory politics, and their commitment to organization devolved into an unapologetically authoritarian stance. An anonymous author in 1905 even expressed *fear* that the revolution might bring universal franchise to the Russian Empire: “The right to vote is not a natural right, with which every inhabitant enters the world, . . . but is really an obligation placed on citizens. . . . Denying this to those elements which constitute the strength of the nation, in which the nation expresses its vitality, would be a great loss, and thus [our] party hopes to expand [the vote] to the politically mature or maturing popular elements. However, being guided by a doctrine which commands that this be granted to everyone conceals within itself the danger of warping the political life of the country.” This author recognized that his position was highly unpopular. “The Democratic National movement has long given the impression that it was working for the future of society against the will of that society,” he wrote. “This does not at all deprive [us] of moral strength, because the national movement draws its moral strength not from the contemporary generation alone, but also and above all from the best traditions of the past.”¹³⁵

One manifesto issued by the National League in 1905 declared that “the recent events in our country have demonstrated clearly the danger that threatens us because of a lack of broader organization.” Specifically, this pamphlet decried the massive strikes then under way and attributed them to this “lack of organization.” To counter this, it was necessary to “organize throughout the entire country, among all politically thinking elements, a national party, taking care to preserve the moral unity of society [and] to work toward the creation of a cohesive national force.”¹³⁶ In an often-reprinted 1905 article, “The Foundations of Polish Politics,” Dmowski declared his aspiration to build the National League into an underground government capable of suppressing all those Poles who might challenge his vision of the national cause. A strong state, Dmowski wrote, could tolerate some individuals who disagreed with the national ideal and opposed the national state, but when a nation lacked the means to prevent these people from undermining the collective cause, “excessive tolerance for divisive views and aspirations would be national suicide.”

¹³⁴ See the account by Józefat Bohuszewicz, “Wspomnienia z czasów przynależności do Ligi Narodowej,” Wilno, April 20, 1932 (Archiwum PAN w Warszawie, Teka Stanisława Kozickiego, sygn. 30, jednostek 3), p. 8.

¹³⁵ “Stronictwo Demokratyczno-Narodowe, jego zasady i działalność: Odczyt wygłoszony na zjeździe przedstawicieli stronnictwa w Warszawie i na szeregach zebrań w kraju,” *Przegląd Wszehpolski* 11 (July 1905): 464, 483–84.

¹³⁶ Untitled, undated one-page leaflet (BN DŹS, sygn. 2932, Teka IB8).

Dmowski considered it imperative to establish “a general discipline; we must create unity in those areas in which there is only one path for the nation. . . . The nation becomes the master of its fate not only when it has many good sons, but also when it possesses enough strength to restrain its bad ones.”¹³⁷

CONCLUSION

The goal of National Democracy was to “restrain” Poland’s “bad sons,” to create the “state within a state” that would allow Poland to “act” once again. Even independence was a secondary concern for the *Endecja*; the movement’s primary objective was to establish the authority and discipline needed to organize “the mob.” As I have argued in this article, this preoccupation was not a simple betrayal of the commitment to “the people” so ardently proclaimed by the young radicals of the 1880s. Instead, the *Endecja*’s authoritarianism was a consequence of the insistence, first seen on the pages of *Głos*, that the “abstractions” of Marxist teleology be abandoned in exchange for a focus on the “real” needs of the people as they existed here and now. Such a dehistoricized conception of the *lud* put the National Democrats in a difficult position whenever workers and peasants demonstrated more concern for social change than for national unity. Truly listening to the voices of the people might require that one subordinate “the national question” to “the social question,” and this was something the *Endecja* would not do. For those in the Polish Socialist Party who placed national unity (and thus the “realization” of the nation) in the future, after a chiliastic moment of revolution, it became difficult to speak of social discipline in the present since the future utopia could only come after a period of disorder and class conflict. A nation thus located in time could not become a site for authority, at least not until a moment of revolution arrived and a socialist leadership began to construct a new world (at which point, of course, many socialists would perceive their own need for obedience). For the National Democrats the problem was much more immediate. Unable to locate their imagined national cohesion in (future) time, they had to try to create it in the present.

René Rémond once argued that the “new type of right” that emerged around the turn of the century in Europe arose “from the ground of the old right wing.” According to this interpretation, there are genetic links between the nineteenth-century counterrevolutionary aristocracy and the twentieth-century nationalist right.¹³⁸ The authoritarianism that became such a powerful force after 1900

¹³⁷ R. Dmowski, “Podstawy polityki polskiej,” *Przegląd Wszepolski* (July 1905): 343, 349, 358–59.

¹³⁸ René Rémond, *The Right Wing in France: From 1815 to de Gaulle*, trans. James M. Laux (Philadelphia, 1966), p. 217. See also Abraham J. Peck, *Radicals and Reactionaries: The Crisis of Conservatism in Wilhelmine Germany* (Washington, D.C., 1978).

is thus cast as a revolt against earlier democratization and liberalization, as a desire to go back to a (mythical) time of secure hierarchies and social discipline. This new right was characterized, in the words of Shulamit Volkov, by “popular antimodernism.”¹³⁹ More recent scholarship has demonstrated convincingly that the new right was indeed new, with roots in the late nineteenth-century left and (more generally) in the cultural and social context of modernity.¹⁴⁰ The rapid transformation of European nationalism from a revolutionary ideology into a doctrine of authority and hatred should not lead us to imagine that the right co-opted the rhetoric of the left. Instead, some of those who had been among the revolutionaries and democrats of the 1880s were pulled toward a quintessentially modern rhetoric of discipline and authority because they could no longer sustain their faith in the “abstractions” of historical time. The young “patriots” at *Głos* initially thought they could remain on the left without believing in the future. They were wrong.

¹³⁹ Shulamit Volkov, *The Rise of Popular Antimodernism in Germany: The Urban Master Artisans, 1873–1896* (Princeton, N.J., 1978).

¹⁴⁰ See, particularly, Zeev Sternhell, Mario Sznajder, and Maia Asheri, *The Birth of Fascist Ideology: From Cultural Rebellion to Political Revolution*, trans. David Maisel (Princeton, N.J., 1994), p. 5.