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ARTICLE

The Revolution That Did Not Happen. Labor Insurgency in Late Russian Poland

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Abstract

Russian Poland was among the most militant tsarist borderlands during the 1905–1907 Revolution in the Russian Empire. However, only a decade later, when revolutionary movements again loomed large and shook the whole region after 1917, Poland remained relatively calm. Forging a new statehood after 1918 rivaled the earlier popular drive toward social revolution. Revolution was aborted in Poland; in other rim regions of the Russian Empire, however, the situation evolved differently, and this scenario should not be taken as self-explanatory. The dynamic of political contention on the ground in the inter-revolutionary decade is the key to understand the pathways of the new state and its society. But the existing accounts deliver only a fragmentary picture, concentrating on the teleology of nation, nation state and its elites or party politics. Meanwhile, the dynamics of labor contention can be hardly squared with unanimous class or national mobilizations. This article addresses this gap drawing from an extensive collection of courses on social unrest and conflict in the Kingdom of Poland based on administrative sources from local Polish and central Russian archives (more than 3300 entries on contentious events). Covering broad available sources, it offers a picture of labor unrest spanning from tinier township workshops, insular, dispersed industrialization of smaller cities harboring quite large mills, to fully-fledged industrial power hubs. The findings show the large heterogeneity of conflict among urban workers. The initial enthusiasm of the 1905 upheaval did not hold sway for long. Workers were tired with the revolutionary mobilization, derailed by the state repression and reluctant to embark on political action again. The lore of 1905 was not an important point of reference for the forthcoming mobilizations. Instead, protests had their own rhythms and spatial patterns, resembling the pre-industrial calendar of festivities turning into insurgencies but also followed pan-imperial causes. Inter-ethnic tensions kicked in: within crews (mostly Polish-Jewish) but above all between rank-and-file workers and foremen, often of German origin. This plurality resulted in various possibilities to build a working class imagined community ranging from a single factory, through branch-wide solidarities, national filiation up to pan-imperial class alliance. Also the tsarist administration, interested in maintaining the basic stability of supply and keep the state going was an important factor. These heterogenous field of tensions did not form any cleavage conductive to singular mobilization. However, it was susceptible to broader political projects binding various claims. Such a project was a new Poland, supported by major parties and perceived by many as

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nothing less as a revolutionary state for a while promising anti-imperial self-assertion, national rights, political freedom, and social emancipation.

Keywords: socialism; nationalism; revolution; workplace conflict; Poland; 1905 Revolution

Revolutionary prospects

Russian Poland (i.e. the Kingdom of Poland here) was among the most militant borderlands of the Russian Empire during the 1905–1907 revolution. Home to long-lasting strikes and breeding bellicose street fighters, the region witnessed unprecedented political upheaval manifested in the emergence of mass parties, labor unions and a new public culture. While the customary name for the events between 1904 and 1907 is the "Russian Revolution of 1905," a large portion of the militancy, strikes, street fighting, and other social unrest occurred in the urban centers of Russian Poland. Over one third of the strikes happened there, and they were generally more massive than elsewhere in the empire, with up to 90 percent of workers striking at least once in 1905. Political parties grew from tiny, cadre organizations run chiefly by the intelligentsia into mass membership parties. By 1906, one fifth of Polish workers had joined a labor union, and a similar proportion had joined a political party; up to one fifth of these were women. At least 150,000 people were mobilized, most of them for the very first time.[1] However, it was not a unidirectional mobilization. A class-based party, the internationalist Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL) competed with the more nationally oriented Polish Socialist Party (PPS) and with the Bund, a movement aimed at organizing Jewish workers empire-wide. They were soon rivaled by the Polish nationalism of the National Democracy party and its labor branch, the National Workers' Union. The tsarist October Manifesto in 1905, which brought constitutional reform and abolished preventive censorship, together with liberalized law on associations from March 1906, prompted the development of all types of voluntary organizations, including trade unions. These events, for better and for worse, ushered the Polish Kingdom into the age of modern politics.

However, only a decade later, when revolutionary movements again loomed large and shook the whole region after 1917, Poland remained relatively calm. Forging a new statehood after 1918 rivaled the earlier popular drive toward social revolution. Revolution was aborted in Poland; in other rim regions of the Russian Empire, however, the situation evolved differently, and this scenario should not be taken as self-explanatory. Poland, rather, is a negative case of revolution that did not happen, even as a failed attempt, and this fact begs for an explanation that goes beyond the assumption that the nation state was simply a natural outcome.

There are several reasons to reject such a bogus explanation. National aspirations intensified after 1905 in all the belligerent regions of the empire with non-Russian populations and usually converged in a revolutionary drive instead of opposing or substituting it.[2] Moreover, a large proportion of the urban dwellers and workers in the Kingdom were not ethnically Polish, and those who were, did not necessarily regard that as the main factor defining their political loyalty.[3] The demographics of

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the swelling industrial centers, with incoming rural workers posing new challenges for political organizing, were similar in the kingdom and in Russia proper.[4] What happened in 1905 clearly demonstrated that revolution was not incompatible with local grievances and that workers did make class-based claims and built powerful, class-based organizations.[5] The events of 1905, despite the crushing defeat and the self-assertion of autocracy, did intensify labor mobilization in other regions, and often cemented socialist parties' grasp on the working class.[6] In Russia, 1905 was perhaps not as directly a dress rehearsal for 1917 as Lenin famously claimed, but it did intensify social fractures, laying the ground work for future Bolshevik successes.[7] The autocratic context that cornered the labor movement into adopting revolutionary strategies was present in St. Petersburg and in Warsaw alike.[8] Against this backdrop, the existing accounts of the kingdom deliver only a fragmentary picture.

The standard story of "Polish independence" focuses on elite actors and rests on a tacit assumption that all that happened before somehow led to the formation of Poland.[9] Such accounts uphold the customary perception of empires as "prisons of nations" and posit either an ahistorical validity of the nation as the "holder" of the state container, or at least associate empires with a bygone form incapable of surviving in times of industrial modernity. Moreover, unlike Russia proper, "Poland" has also remained relatively untouched by new labor history[10], and the record on labor is mostly party-centered.[11] A few exceptions have pushed knowledge on the cultural substance of the working class forward, but focused on yawning gaps such as gender relations or religious dissent.[12] A relatively reliable lore of socialist historiography concerning political parties and important additions concerning the social history of the working class[13] or the political culture of workers and their place in the broader debate[14] do not sufficiently explain the ebbs and flows of the bottom up mobilization of labor in the last decade of imperial rule and the stability of its legitimacy.[15] The period between the Revolution of 1905 petering out and the withdrawal of the Russian imperial administration at the onset of the First World War remains, put simply, under-researched, with questions regarding alternative ways out of the empire rarely seriously asked.

Although industrial workers or even urban labor were not a numerical majority in the predominantly rural country, the events of 1905 showed that labor militancy could significantly destabilize the autocratic regime. As such, it could certainly tip the scales in the balance of forces during the power vacuum following a devastating Great War, and on the verge of another one, waged with a nominally leftist force campaigning under the banners of social liberation (the Bolshevik Red Army). The uncharted pathways of labor mobilization are essential for comprehending the broader trajectories of state formation. To address this lacuna, the article undertakes a synthetic analysis of the elementary aspects of labor insurgency beyond official party activity in the crucial decade preceding the war and revolution. Within this design, the blurry lines of impromptu mobilizations and eventful loyalties may be traced.[16] However, definitive answers to the big questions of revolution, war and state building must remain outside of its scope.

Sources and method

Lands from the Russian empire formed the core of the new Polish state after 1918, with the capital city Warsaw and the biggest industrial hub, Łódź (second in terms

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of population). They were supplemented with territory that was previously part of the Austrian Crownlands or Prussian provinces. If, in terms of institutional developments and political experience these were crucial tributaries, only the Russian portion boasted considerable industrial centers and could have produced political militancy capable of shifting the trajectories of the new state.[17] Hence, the article focuses on the lands forming the Russian-controlled Kingdom of Poland, which were much more industrialized than the more eastern regions that constituted Western governorates incorporated directly to the Russian state.

Going into our work in the archives as a small team, we did not want to assume that there was any particular form of contention to be detected and instead registered any collective form of action entering the reporting. Our guiding question was similar to those posed by Charles Tilly and others when defining a contentious event: How can we explain how people who at a given point in time are not making contentious claims start doing so.[18] We also looked for actors making claims, their identities (who they, and others, said they were), and tried to depict their actions and claims, their scale, embeddedness in particular circumstances and the presence of mediators. What was also interesting were the various repertoires of contention, understood after Tilly as "clustered, learned, yet improvisational" interactions people undertake to make claims, innovating within limits "set by the repertoire already established for their place, time, and pair."[19] Accordingly, I wanted to understand the repertoires adopted by contentious actors, and the trajectories of their mobilizations to gain a fuller picture of (un)revolutionary politics. However, unlike classical accounts of collective action, the sources were not press notes[20] but much less standardized and more cumbersome administrative records.

Just like the press, who go into a story with their own biases, state functionaries were oriented to track down certain culprits. They were simply overzealous in looking for potential revolutionaries either because of their own fears or orders from above. Their accounts are performative texts written with a practical intention and serving various goals, such as presenting their own feats or reassuring higher ups that order had been restored. Nonetheless, often the actual course of events can be ascertained by reading between the lines or based on small details or omissions against the explicit intention of the text. So is the work of a historian dealing with groups who left only indirect archival traces, created to suppress their activities. However, these sources are not only expressions of elite consciousness or police rationality, but also a record of the agency of these subaltern groups. In this respect, I followed the Indian historians associated with the subaltern studies.[21] In order to achieve this, broad searches were helpful.

Correspondingly, our archival queries encompassed not just large cities but also smaller towns, and covered almost all available archives, yielding over 3,300 entries with accounts of contentious events.[22] However, they are not suitable for quantitative analysis or systematic comparisons. The level of preservation differs, and is sometimes higher in provincial archives, although usually the culture of reporting there remained wanting. Thus, one cannot compare intensity in time or between regions because what was on the radar of a particular administrative unit differed wildly. Various state functionaries had ill-defined and overlapping competences (for instance the gendarmerie had varying arrangements with urban police). Adding insult to injury, only much diversified and incomplete materials were preserved. That said, to lift one's spirts, such

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diversity offers a fuller picture of labor unrest in qualitative terms, spanning from tiny township workshops to the insular, dispersed industrialization of smaller cities that sometimes had quite large mills, to fully-fledged industrial hubs. I also visited the archives of central institutions in Warsaw and St. Petersburg (records later partially transferred to Moscow) to sketch a general picture of trends on the governorate level accessible through synthetic reports prepared by the state administration (such as factory inspections).[23] The article focuses on the period after 1907, when revolutionary fervor had withered away and before the German occupation starting 1915, a period that is understudied in existing accounts and arguably holds the key to understanding the later trajectories.

The post-revolutionary disappointment

In cities with a growing industrial presence, the Revolution of 1905 left deep marks. Even the accounts of party politics that frame revolutionary activity in a favorable light paint the post-revolutionary period (1908–1909) in murky colors as a time of external repression and internal reaction. This is with regards to both the literature on the socialist movement[24] and accounts following the germs of liberalization from autocracy in Russian Poland.[25] Indeed, tsarist officials were busy prosecuting earlier crimes from the revolutionary era. Police and court files alike are filled with cases of political enemies of the state organizing illicit activity, revolutionary terror, and disruptive political strikes. The police apparatus re-asserted its powers and got to grips with direct street policing. This, coupled with wide-reaching fatigue among the local population with revolutionary turmoil, allowed the state apparatus to persecute disruptive actors. The repressions were the harshest in hotbeds of strike movement like Łódź, where martial law lasted the longest and a less repressive state of emergency was maintained until the First World War. In this, the biggest industrial center of the region, the revolutionary upheaval came to end with a nearly universal lockout by the great factories in late 1906. Lasting several months, with some 100,000 people losing any hope of income, it finally ended with a defeat of the workers' committees.[26] While kindling networks of solidarity all over the country, the lockout triggered a debate reverberating far beyond Łódź over the responsibility of factory owners, the vagaries of revolution, the role of socialist parties, but also the agency of the workers.[27] Smaller attempts to threaten employees with the closure of factories and rehiring of staff followed in other places.[28] What seemed to be post-revolutionary stability in some localities in central Warsaw populated by Polish elites, themselves wary of revolution and critical of rebellious workers, was a constant tension in the industrial hubs or impoverished suburbs.[29] However, the repression successfully blocked political organizing which both political parties and tsarist officials admitted in unison.[30] The officials contended with the demise of the socialist movement with satisfaction, describing the falling participation among rank and file workers.

Indeed, after the revolutionary mobilization channeled through the parties receded, workers often parted ways with political organizations. The dramatic pinnacle of 1905 appeared to be an inglorious experience—the PPS split, its military squads were dissolved when they began to slide into banditry,[31] and many were disappointed with the disorganized strikes. Workers were simply weary and looked with a more favorable eye to forces promising stability, such as the National Democracy party and even the state

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apparatus.[32] Many were simply satisfied with the revolutionary gains. Despite spectacular backlashes like the Łódź lockout, in many factories, higher wages and shorter working hours were now taken for granted.[33] There were also ways to channel moderate activities legally through non-political unions or professional associations.[34] Whatever the reason, the revolutionary zeal died out.

Curiously, by the winter of 1907, almost all the actors in the 1905 upheaval had ceased to call it a revolution. Only those on the far left occasionally remarked that, "the experience of mass struggles of 1905-1907, their victories and defeats, leads to only one conclusion: the base for the revolutionary struggle has to be broadened, more and more."[35] There was neither recollection of the revolution nor a will to emulate the revolutionary sequence again. The main event that was commemorated was Bloody Sunday, which testifies to the pan-imperial nature of the memories of the period. In 1907, there was a sweeping wave of general strikes to honor the victims and demonstrate the strength of organized labor. Greater deployment of repressive measures and police presence was necessary to contain the protests,[36] leading to clashes and casualties.[37] However, the scope of the strikes disappointed political parties and was perhaps because of an exceptionally harsh winter that year. A year later, strikes did not take place at all, and only reports on "planned disturbances" are to be found.[38] That year, all that marked the anniversary were red banners with revolutionary slogans tied to telegraph poles or chimneys.[39] The 1st of May in 1908 was calm, too. Police repression and protester weariness had had an impact.

Demonstrations were cancelled and police reports concluded with relief that "there were no disorders."[40] Besides the labor commemorations, socialist parties cultivated a general idea of revolution in their propaganda materials while only occasionally referring to its empirical realization. In August 1908, a guard removed a printed proclamation calling for proletarian unity in the name of "independent Poland" and referencing the events of 1905 from a wall in Lublin.[41] On a telegraph pole in Żyrardów, somebody strung a banner with the slogan "Long live revolution" in reference to the 1st of May.[42] In the run up to the May Day celebration each year, similar banners and flags were regularly found hanging from telegraph poles, cable lines, or chimneys.[43] Sometimes the imagery was a bit more creative, as in a Warsaw cemetery where SDKPiL members hung two flags. One was red with the slogan, "Long live the revolution and socialism, down with capitalism." The other flag was black and had a drawing of a skull commemorating "the fallen comrades of ideas in common."[44] In general, however, even if the far left attempted to use key dates from the 1905 upheaval to keep the revolutionary spirit alive, the attempts left workers largely unmoved.

What certainly did not help was inter-party competition and a lack of coordination. Occasionally one party called for a strike, while another issued a leaflet urging members to work. Also, theoretical hair-splitting was not that important to the rank and file, although it certainly occasionally triggered bitter quarrels.[45] Disappointment with street politics or simply lacking organizational capacities in times of repression caused major parties to give up on large-scale labor organization. The PPS-FR (*Polska Partia Socjalistyczna - Frakcja Rewolucyjna*; Polish Socialist Party - Revolutionary Faction abandoned it altogether, while the SDKPiL was drawn into factional quibbles and more often expressed theoretical fascination with mass strikes than put actual effort into labor organization. Only the Bund and the PPS-L (Polska Partia

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Socjalistycnza - Lewica; Polish Socialist Party - Left took up the baton of mass, party-led union politics.[46] The emptied space was re-occupied by the officially acknowledged Christian and nationalist labor unions, with the "class" unions organized by socialists constantly in danger of repression.[47] People looked for stability, which only the tightly confined legality under governmental surveillance could provide. However, this did not mean that labor contention vanished whatsoever.

The rhythm and travel of industrial protest

Labor protest on the ground rarely followed the agitation of political parties trying to either emulate the revolution, avoid it, or celebrate landmark patriotic anniversaries. Apart from the cycle of disappointment and repression, there were also yearly rhythms tied to the weather or cultural events. Broad statistical data reveal a readable annual sequence dynamic of protest. Labor militancy intensified in the late spring and summer months.[48] The obvious peak date was the 1st of May, but the increase year by year goes further than that. One can speculate on the reasons. In pre-industrial Europe, popular uprisings tended to correspond to the Christian calendar of festivities,[49] and certainly many customs remained powerful among populations who had only recently moved to urban areas, even in larger cities.[50] Summer weather prompted various forms of working-class public spheres such as open air meetings ("*majówka*"). Such events resembled in many respects a village party with food, singing, and dancing. Though rarer after 1907,[51] they spurred on various common initiatives, more radical ones included. In warm months, the economic pressure on a working-class family lessened, because their moderate earnings were not going toward fuel to heat the flat. Additionally, families could supplement their diets with products acquired from village-based relatives or wild grown plants. Thus, readiness to risk a pay loss was higher. However, there were less obvious features of the "protest calendar" as well.

In Zduńska Wola, at the textile factory of Josif Sznajder, workers were dissatisfied with one of the foremen, Evgenii (Eugeniusz) Karl Runciger. Such tensions were very widespread—with harsh supervision, rude behavior by foremen and interethnic tensions causing conflicts up the ladder of the factory hierarchy and marring shopfloor reality in practically every factory (see below). The protest, although certainly simmering for a long time, erupted just before Easter of 1907. The resulting strike made workers put down their tools in the days after the holiday. This is hardly incidental. We do not know more about the grievances and emotions expressed during this particular strike, but it seems that Easter often triggered unrest.[52] In the Polish context, church celebrations may have stimulated some intense patriotic feelings such as hostility toward a foreman of German origin, and political propaganda around Easter often contained allegations about imperial states, in one case described as "Teutonic and Mongolian hordes."[53] Moreover, Easter days in European history had often been marked by anti-Jewish unrest. Easter celebrations included traditions like group rivalries or battles between local youth (with buckets of water but often also stones). Agitated crowds may have turned against state functionaries, especially when they attempted to pacify the mood.[54] But Easter also stimulated entire strike waves, as in April 1912, when there were plans for a general strike in the factories demanding better

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working conditions. The workers waited until Easter and a miners' strike, because due to the resulting lack of coal, factory owners would have to reduce output and lower wages, so the strike would not be considered as initiated by the workers.[55] Social unrest was structured by yearly rhythms that either strengthened or lowered economic or political impulses to step out.

There were also acts that did not follow any predetermined pattern but repeatedly denoted bottom-up insurgencies. They often went hand in hand with spontaneous rejection to be submissive. During the 1905 upheaval, it was common for people to encounter "groups of workers walking along the sidewalk three to four in a row, who deliberately and defiantly occupied the entire width of the sidewalk when encountering a state official, forcing the policemen to get off the sidewalk."[56] Many refused to remove their caps in the presence of officials, but forced them to pay homage to the socialist banner that way.[57] Such reversals continued and were also often directed against portraits of the royal family or insignias of power as well a typical repertoire in a bottom-up action.[58] A man refused to remove his cap in front of the portrait of the tsar in a forestry institute, which triggered retaliations.[59] Portraits were also destroyed and desecrated by private people[60] and during armed robberies by party squads,[61] sometimes also as a part of more elaborate mock ceremonies. In 1906, three residents of Mszczonów, a town southwest of Warsaw, gathered in an apartment. A certain Świderski announced that there was no need for a Russian tsar and that a Polish king was needed. At the next meeting, he took a portrait of Tsar Nicholas II off the wall and threw it away as he ceremonially uttered the words, "son of a bitch" (*sukinsyn*).[62] These acts may refer to what Ralf Ludtke called *Eigensinn*, "denoting willfulness, spontaneous self-will, a kind of self-affirmation, an act of (re)appropriating alienated social relations on and off the shop floor by self-assertive prankishness, demarcating a space of one's own."[63] They were acts of defiance by particular people, but they could later pose a background for broader shifts of legitimacy, especially when spread through gossip or itinerant tradesmen.

Accordingly, industrial contention unfolded along certain spatial patterns, too. Not only did occurrence after Easter made strikes similar to pogroms, another, less glorious form of collective action. Students of "the pogrom paradigm"[64] have documented how the very idea of a pogrom was also a direct impulse to action, which used to spread through dubious emissaries. Journeymen and railway workers carried ideas and rumors. This feature is perhaps characteristic of most forms of collective action, and strikes were no different. Strikers made use of the connections between factories and the working-class districts traversing the urban topography. Looking through the database listing contentious events ordered in time and space, one can easily notice regional peaks of strike activity following one after the other.

Workers putting down their tools in one factory spurred on others in factories that were not necessarily directly related by profile or production chain. Party emissaries or labor union functionaries attempted to coordinate strikes to give them a larger impact and execute pressure on all the factory owners at once. This made concessions easier to garner since the comparative advantage of those resisting was no longer an argument. These kinds of efforts were particularly impressive when aimed at organizing dispersed professions operating out of smaller workshops. Brick makers, construction workers, bakers, or shoemakers were usually deprived of the empowering experience

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of large mass meetings or high-impact mass actions. However, mobilization was not impossible as, for instance, a coordinated brick makers strike in Warsaw in 1911 testifies.[65] Also, bakers from small shops all over the city were able to coordinate their efforts through communication or imitation.[66] But sometimes strikes just spread like a wildfire.

In 1913, laborers at the metal factory Vulcan on the right-bank in Warsaw, a frequent hotbed of radicalism, went on strike to support amendments made by workers' representatives to a bill on health insurance. Later, other metal factories in the Praga district took up the cause, the strike wave spread to the left bank and eventually smaller shops joined in, with the action reaching 18,000 people, almost a half of Warsaw workers.[67] In this way, various groups were mobilized in the name of general, abstract aims spanning the entire imperial polity.

This demonstrates that insurgencies cannot be neatly separated between premodern, singular residues and more generalized, abstract claims to long-term change. They also should not be retrospectively inscribed in a linear history of the nation or socialist movement.[68] But this does not mean that such action was spontaneous or deprived of agency. Quite the contrary, it could become a part of broader struggles later when the participants decided so, being convinced by ideological narratives binding their claims in broader chains.[69] A good example of this is ethnic animosity.

Interethnic tension

The urban social reality was woven out of complex, ambiguous, and clashing identity threads. The daily shop floor routines were understandably more complicated than the antagonism between rank-and-file workers and exploitative owners as in the simplified narrative of class conflict. The staff was differentiated with respect to ethnicity, national affiliation, regional roots, and political orientation. Its vertical differentiation was another important element of the conflictual landscape. A common cause of shop floor conflicts was friction between workers and supervising staff—above all, foremen. They were directly responsible for factory discipline, which meant that they imposed, for instance, fines for delays. Often rude and offensive, they also abused power, punishing even minor infringements such as unsolicited talking or levied fines arbitrarily. Cases of sexual harassment of female workers were common, too.

The ethnic differentiation of the workplace hierarchy is often expressed in names suggesting the definite ethnic origin of those involved. It's easy to observe that persons named Schmidt[70] or Kratke[71] (German or Polonized German surnames) were often contested foremen. Admittedly, in many cases, one cannot easily assess to what extent ethnic hostility, prejudice, or mere cultural differences contributed to the emergence of tension. The different origins of rural workers contributed to their disorientation in a new setting and placed foremen using Germanized technical vocabulary (even if not German speaking themselves) yet further apart.[72] There were cases in which ethnic background was explicitly mentioned as the source of the conflict, though. In the Lorenz wool factory in Łódź, three workers were dismissed, allegedly for drunkenness and disobeying a foreman. In solidarity, the remaining workers (18 people) suspended work. After the police arrived at the plant, the workers returned to work and explained the reason for the strike. One of the shareholders had introduced a German

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subject to the factory, who, not speaking any Russian or Polish, brought in two other German foremen, who treated the workers harshly and fired some for trivial reasons.[73] These factory tensions illustrate well the complexity of the imperial situation, with power flowing in various directions and particular actors building tactical alliances to navigate the landscape of patterned inequality along ethnic, national, professional, and class lines.[74] Meanwhile, factory hierarchies could be also used to organize patrimonial networks with a political edge as in the case of some nationalist foremen or technical directors stepping in defense of "Polishness" in the factory".[75] Such animosities (or solidarities) might have later been easily rearticulated as mobilization against "Germans" or "Jews" when the nationalist political agitation held sway, and even, if not blatantly, underpinned longings for a "Polish" state and an ethnic reversal, wherein former dominant ethnic others would lose their position.

However, workplace conflicts did not necessarily just express tensions between workers and factory management. There were also horizontal clashes, especially acute in the case of interethnic encounters. In the German-owned Krenz factory in Zduńska Wola, a Jewish supervisor, Lejzer Tondowski, hired a new weaver, who happened to be Icek Spiegel. The new Jewish employee did not enjoy the sympathy of the Polish crew. Under the leadership of Józef Muzolf, the Poles announced that if a Jew was hired, they would cease to work. The threat was ignored. In response, the workers put down their tools and left the factory in March 1913. After almost 2 weeks, the factory reopened with some new workers and higher piece rates. Whether or not the unfortunate Spiegel retained his job remains unclear. In a similar vein, numerous reports display worry about strained interethnic relationships. Once, Polish workers protested against a young Jewish apprentice learning to work on a loom and left the factory.[76] Another time, hiring two Jews triggered a strike.[77] In yet another factory, two Jews were beaten up, and when the owner tried to punish the alleged aggressors, a solidarity strike was launched.[78] Admittedly, not only did Polish workers express anti-Semitic attitudes, but Jewish workers also sometimes attempted to expel the Poles from the workplace. For instance, in one of the Warsaw factories, Jewish workers went on strike when the owner hired three new Christian employees (two men and one woman).[79] Amidst this complex relationship, anti-Semitic coding was more and more widespread, which gradually replaced anti-German sentiments, previously more prominent. Various conflicts and problems were interpreted as signs of Jewish foreignness and hostility, and anti-Semitic reasoning entered for good the reality of social interactions in Russian Poland. The heated Duma campaigning and the ensuing boycott of Jewish shops initiated by the National Democracy party in 1912 did make an impact according to police reporting.[80] Ethnic tensions loomed large.

Various alliances were forged between workers and state officials to negotiate some form of viable stability. Workers may have also cooperated with their direct supervisors along ethnic lines or support their ethnic kin in national clashes. Meanwhile, interethnic animosities provided a background for everyday workplace nationalism. In this tapestry of alliances, loyalties, conflicts, and tensions, there was no single direction determining future political orientation and possibly tipping the scales in favor of another revolutionary upheaval. Foremen who were friends or foes, socialist parties calling for imperial solidarities and nationalist agitators blaming Jewish coworkers for taking too much yarn, but calling off strikes in the name of "Polish industry" in

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Jewish-owned factories; all these are the trailheads of possible pathways, alliances that could have broken easily, solidarities which might have been developed and structures which may have dissolved as quickly as they could resurface to be the cornerstone of new organizations, parties, or armies.

Imagined spatial communities of workers

Amid the complex social tapestry, loyalties might have encompassed various levels. Solidarity with others not known personally, but bound by shared interests could emerge in an accidental situation in the workplace, the town, the country, within the ethnic community, as well as professional or empire-wide comradeship. The basic bond was an impromptu alliance on the street or mutual help in the face of state power. In Jedlińsk near Radom in 1908, Jan Rymbarczyk (a Polish name) hit the land guard Alexeev in his head. When the guard tried to chase the offender, one of the local Jews, 18-year-old Zylberberg, spontaneously grabbed him by the collar and knocked him to the ground. The guard attempted to catch the new offender and fired his gun three times. A crowd gathered and threatened the guard with lynching, shouting, "Beat the guards, kill them!" Two more guards arrived, and after pushing their way through the crowd with weapons, dispersed it. Nearly 40 people were arrested, and their given names clearly indicate Polish and Jewish origin, so this improvised crowd solidarity was clearly interethnic.[81] Active crowds may have gathered at church celebrations and mass festivities, and various branches of manufacturing supported each other and themselves in emergencies, as described above. But such synergies did not suffice for large scale political action.

Hence, socialist parties tried to forge broader and more solid forms of solidarity—they claimed to represent the workers and needed to foster an operative sense of belonging among them. As these were practically the beginnings of political activity among rank-and-file workers, they often did not know much about other militants or even active workers beyond their workshop, factory, or town. The point of contact with the movement might have been a single agitator or even anonymous source delivering party materials. Thus, imagined communities of class needed to be built step by step, extending in space from one factory to an urban unit, and further to a language or ethnic group or perhaps empire wide.[82] Such a community of workers would perceive themselves as part of a group, while not knowing each other in person.

Correspondingly, party literature tried to build general solidarity between factories, branches, and regions. Almost every socialist journal directed toward workers contained a special section on "current news from factories and workshops," which was the most read section.[83] While the SDKPiL almost always opened their leaflets with the call, "Comrades! Workers!" the PPS built a broader, national community of comrades–citizens. The references were coherent with the substance of each party's demands, with the PPS hardly calling for a political protest in the name of the pan-imperial cause.

General political protests signified the rise of an imagined class community, populated by all the workers in the industry branch, the country, or even the entire Russian Empire. This dimension was especially tangible in the general strikes encompassing all of Russian Poland (January 1905 and October–November 1905), or those only slightly

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smaller (May 1905, January 1906, May 1906), and the solidarity strikes with Russian workers (January 1905, December 1905).[84] The strikers must have felt at least some connection with their distant comrades. Not only did the sense of contemporaneity with different events and struggles emerge, but also an imagined community binding different workers who did not know one another personally. Strikes established a broader repertoire of contention characterized by the "cosmopolitanism, autonomy and modularity," attributed to modern protest forms.[85] Their intended goals reached beyond the immediate here and now.

A good example of this is the protest against the rejection of amendments to the insurance reform bill proposed by workers' delegates, which in September 1911 led 20,000 people to put down their tools in Warsaw alone. Socialist parties did not spare any ink in explaining the reform and clarifying its treacherous character. As it was argued, workers should not be responsible for workplace risks and hence carry the burden of insurance.[86] These were coordinated attempts aiming at a pan-imperial reform or general political transformation, requiring systematic, step-by-step efforts. Mobilization for such strikes, with abstract aims deferred in time, also testifies to a growing ability to comprehend the individual situation in a broader perspective.

This capability grew, and politically motivated protests concerned imperial solidarities. The best example is the strike wave after the Lena Goldfield Massacre in April 1912, when troops opened fire on peaceful strikers, killing several hundreds.[87] Although these events took place in far Siberia, after Lena at least 6,553 workers registered to go on strike in Warsaw alone, with the usual centers of radicalism, the metal factories Vulkan and Labor, spearheading the protest. The strike wave spread like a wildfire because of the active agitation of the PPS-Left, which called for a solidarity strike of all the workers of the empire, who were soon to "become an army of enemies of the tsarat,"[88] as one leaflet announced. The trams stopped, which usually caused the strike to travel along the rail network. It remained so despite the open opposition of other socialist groups. While paying lip service to class solidarity, the PPS-FR nevertheless abstained from striking because Polish workers should not forget "about the blows they themselves receive from the tsarat."[89] Warsaw was naturally better plugged in to the pan-imperial circulation of radicalism, but metropolitan workers were not the only ones who felt enough solidarity with the Lena miners to risk reprisals. In Częstochowa, a provincial industrial hub connected via Warsaw–Vienna railway line, at least seven factories went on strike regarding that matter, too.[90] The Lena massacre was an empire-wide game changer, spurring on a readiness for broader strike action.[91] The activists in Russian Poland also made hay while the sun shone.

Several months later, in October 1912, wider imperial solidarity was displayed after a group suicide in the Siberian Kutomara prison. Political prisoners had launched an unsuccessful hunger strike, reported in socialist proclamations.[92] A wave of suicides followed in a desperate protest of encroachments on their rights by a new prison chief. Most of the prisoners were Russian revolutionaries, many of Jewish background. Just one of the victims was a Polish socialist from Warsaw, Józef Puchalski, ps. Matros. PPS-Left and Bund called a strike, which led at least 12,000 people onto the Warsaw streets.[93]

Meanwhile, the diplomatic situation redirected attention outward, and a sense of crisis loomed large.[94] It was not clear how workers would behave had war actually broken out. After the Russian Empire announced its readiness to defend Serbia against

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Austrian–Hungarian aggression, the socialists immediately called for an anti-war strike. The strike also expressed solidarity with protesting workers in St. Petersburg and Baku. Over a half of Warsaw workers ceased working, which demonstrates the power of the socialist-pacifist agenda and pan-imperial class solidarity empire-wide,[95] fragile but already widespread before the war.[96] The tsarist administration was aware of the dangers such solidarities and actively tried to prevent their forming, especially in the regions that were most active in 1905.

Managing the workplace conflict

The imperial policing was not limited to repression but also acted to mitigate some vagaries of industrial life. Entering tactical alliances, tsarist officials attempted to nip any tensions in the bud and prevent the melding of class struggle with anti-state elements. As Jane Burbank aptly put it, "For the [empire's] leaders… governance was about control over resources – territory and labor – and the social order required to secure them. Administration, rather than law, was the primary imperative of Russian rulers."[97] This imperative was put into practice in a complex triadic relationship between the state, its emissaries with their own practical rationalities, and the populations under their governance, themselves highly heterogenous and often conflicted along ethnolinguistic lines.[98] After all, industry's continuous operation was not just important for the owners; basic social stability was also an acute challenge for the state officials.

Not always simply prioritizing the imperative of production, officials aimed at calming down unrest that was potentially dangerous to the state and inconvenient for their own professional careers or just for peace of mind. Although tsarist Russia was not a state characterized by the rule of law, the state functionaries often acted as mediating agents amid bitter factory conflicts. Along with the development of industrial establishments, a special unit was created to control labor conditions and gather information about possible tensions.[99] While the prerogatives of factory inspectors grew, their actual agency was a drop in the ocean. The role of factory inspectors was ambiguous: apart from being underfinanced and understaffed, they were often overly careful not to encroach on the interests of industry because of ideological reasons or simple bribery. Nonetheless, as one scholar put it, at least an inspector "could act as a channel of communication between workers and management and instruct both in the provisions of the law."[100] Some inspectors, and other state functionaries, genuinely tried to find the causes of various conflicts and resolve them in ways that did not generate further trouble.[101] It was not always enough.

When a strike broke loose, state emissaries targeted any political elements involved in the action, and the participants faced swift reaction by the state apparatus. Almost all the reports on strikes classify them with respect to "economic" or "political" motives and verify the presence of "agitators" initiating the strike. Even though spontaneous strikes were illegal, workers could collectively put down their tools after an officially assigned 14-day period binding both sides with respect to terminating the labor contract. Moreover, if the presence of party agitators was not detected and the claims concerned graspable violations or a simple pay raise, workers seldom faced direct punishment. However, they could not resort to direct intimidation or "factory terror," as it was sometimes called, with respect to owners, foremen, or co-workers. Once

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the economic reasons were confirmed, the question usually posed was whether they were justified. What was decisive was not some abstract measure of justice. What was important instead was who breached the fragile stability of the status quo.

For instance, after a strike in a Soczewka factory in the Płock region in October 1909, the explanation given by the owner was classified by the local gendarmerie as "worth considering but not trustworthy." The owner seemed to hope that workers would leave without compensation when new machines were ready to replace them. Claiming unprofitability, the factory's third shift had been cancelled, which extended working time from 8 to 12 hours at a lower piece rate. Understandably, the workers wanted to keep the previous arrangement and refused to work. According to the official assessment, this kind of cunning by an owner was common practice. When a technical innovation was about to be introduced, production was kept running until the last moment, later provoking a strike. After the announcement of lower wages, workers were sacked for striking illegally, and a desired number of workers could be hired on new conditions afterward.[102] The next report in the same case unambiguously put the responsibility on the factory stating that there had been no agitation or instigating workers, but that they were provoked by the owner. However, there was a danger, as the report soberly noted, that party agitation would find fertile ground if workers were treated this way and their grievances remained unaddressed.[103] This fear was widespread, clearly demonstrating the will among government officials to maintain order and avoid politization, as opposed to simply siding with factory owners for the sake of suppressing unrest. While the officials were rarely sympathetic to workers' claims as such, once they realized that there was no chance at providing long term social peace without addressing them, they were ready to support them.[104] Thus, the role of the government needs to be reassessed, as not reducible to a monolithic repressive autocracy necessarily hostile toward industrial workers. Its intervention in strikes most often occurred when they became sites of political agitation or threatened to spillover more broadly. However, the particular balance between both sides of the labor contract and the state, and limits of accepted contention, were subjected to practical judgment each time, influencing the outcome.

Sometimes factory inspectors tried to solve labor conflicts directly. During a 4-day work stoppage at Zygmunt Szmidt's factory, 10 out of 50 crew members demanded a pay raise and an end to arbitrary dismissals. Negotiations were conducted by a factory inspector. Due to his efforts, the workers agreed to resume work under the existing conditions, with a remuneration increase promised in the future. Nonetheless, the striking workers were arrested for a while and then fired. Most probably, the owner decided to ask for harsher police measures despite the successful efforts of the inspector.[105] Understandably, such outcomes did not help to earn workers' trust, which was necessary to maintain order long term. The imperial state applied various policies unevenly and indecisively. It was occasionally repressive beyond measure, did not offer clear limits, nor, above all, any stable channels of accepted bargaining backed by an elementary sense of fairness.

The imperial regime was soon to be toppled by war, which removed the remnants of its shaky legitimacy. At the outset, the empire held firm; the draft went smoothly and contrary to the fears of some Russian commentators, there was little danger of a Polish uprising.[106] However, haphazard moves, military violence, ethnic deportations, and

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the obsession with home front spies and saboteurs severely undermined acceptance of the imperial state among different groups, who meanwhile saw themselves through growingly ethnic lenses.[107] Later the shoots of frustration were easily refashioned into more all-encompassing visions of social and political transformation.

Swerve of revolution into the nation state

The article brings to the fore the bottom-up forms of insurgency in urban areas of Russian Poland. Combing through numerous reports by police, gendarmerie, governorate staff, and similar, my aim was to shed light on the ground-level tensions and practices of resistance, often developing in interaction with party activity and an important factor circumscribing the conditions for possible broader political action. "The workers" of the Kingdom of Poland is naturally a very general category lumping together people of various ethnicities, genders, political loyalties, and professional identities. The study shed light only on some of these dimensions and only a few people composing this heterogenous group. Certainly, the workers of 1915, let alone 1918, were not those of 1905. Referring to the vocabulary offered by later unorthodox Marxism, both the technical and political composition of labor changed.[108] Due to a relatively fast turnaround, within 10 years different people composed the core of active workers. Incoming labor migration brought many new people to the industrial centers. For example, between 1897 and 1913 the population of Łódź grew from 340,000 to 600,000 and the population of Warsaw grew from 660,000 to one million people.[109] But also the capacities for political articulation evolved. New people could be more easily subsumed by the factory regime and perhaps occasionally accept lower wages. But they could also learn from those who had already been seasoned in political organizing.[110] The collected sources unfortunately did not allow me to precisely assess the role of the newcomers in labor relations or estimate their exact participation in particular acts of contention. However, the archival record reveals different lines of resistance, swelling fissures, and the conflictual loyalties of workers.

The landscape of insurgence after 1905 was delineated by post-revolutionary disappointment and a mixture of emergent forms of resistance unchanneled from above, economic claims and interethnic tensions. All could be rearticulated by political narratives and combined into broader packages of claims conducive for socialist or nationalist mobilization (or a combination of both). However, they were not reducible to such master narratives of political agitation. Resulting solidarities could have various spatial forms and concerned different groups defined by a shared situation, language, ethnicity, branch of production, class, or belonging to a particular political entity. Some workers were more experienced in organizing strikes, capable of complex strategies and up for mobilizations in the name of abstract, distant aims. Contentious actions could morph relatively easily, and divergent mobilizations followed one another. It is often hard to assess whether these were different groups or the same people reacting due to various impulses. But it's clear that the field of action was highly heterogenous and labile, and even particular concepts or slogans could have had very different meanings for those taking to the streets in their name, socialism or revolution being the most obvious examples.[111] Judging from the sources produced in the period 1907–1915, it is hard to assess the future form of the state, which in a way confirms recent findings

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pointing to the fact that the transformation of empires into nation states was not a predetermined outcome.[112] The nation state was not an action on the horizon for the majority of the actors and the revolution that did not happen can be explained but should not be assumed. Or maybe there was indeed a revolution?

In Russian Poland, the situation was significantly reconfigured by the German occupation, which after 1915 removed the country from the Russian revolutionary theater. While the German administration was certainly a stabilizing force blocking the direct 1917 revolutionary upsurge from spreading westward, it contributed significantly to the painful awareness of the perils foreign occupation brings, influencing the national mood.[113] The outbreak of war brought immediate economic hardship, intensified by confiscations for the war effort that rendered most of the Kingdom's industry idle.[114] This drove labor migration adding to compulsory labor schemes and war displacements.[115] The war decimated the industrial working class in the former Kingdom of Poland. The municipal elections of 1916 showed the workers' political leverage dwindling.[116] The PPS called for workers to take up the revolutionary baton and "under the red banner, as before, fight against foreign violence."[117] The SDKPiL celebrated the Bolshevik revolution and hoped for a follow-up, long after the establishment of the Polish state,[118] but there was not always anyone to respond to the call. Nonetheless, in 1918, the initial proclamations of independence were made under socialist auspices and significant social demands were addressed in the tentative program of the first socialist government. But with significant concessions made to the popular classes and the PPS in support of the Polish state, the revolutionary surge in Poland was weakened and the internationalist left was unable to spur on a larger movement. Group loyalties, cascade mobilization effects, political choices, and previous experiences were a factor in individual decision-making. Many feared revolutionary turmoil, others wanted to get rid of ethnic others in dominant positions. A sufficient number of people aimed at national self-assertion as Poles against Jewish neighbors or imperial powers. But the state-building project was indeed for many a revolution, promising a wide-reaching reconstruction of society along lines they found desirable. Their petty ambitions, local animosities, bitter disappointments, and hopes for social and national emancipation for a short, but crucial time came together in the revolutionary project of popular Poland. It was not a result of constant mobilization and stable national affiliation, at least not for all or even most of the local population, but rather the conjunctural effect of many emotions, wounds, and aims.

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Notes

1. Robert Blobaum, *Rewolucja: Russian Poland, 1904–1907* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 72–73, 113.

2. See accounts of such different contexts as Latvia, Georgia, Uzbekistan and Finland, respectively: Andrew Ezergailis, *The 1917 Revolution in Latvia* (Boulder [Colo.]: New York: East European Quarterly; distributed

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by Columbia University Press, 1974); Eric Lee, *The Experiment: Georgia's Forgotten Revolution, 1918–1921* (London: Zed, 2017); Adeeb Khalid, *Making Uzbekistan: Nation, Empire, and Revolution in the Early USSR* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2015); Risto Alapuro, *State and Revolution in Finland*, Second edition (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2019); for a synthetic accounts see Alexander Semyonov and Jeremy Smith, "Nationalism and Empire before and after 1917," *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 17, no. 3 (2017): 369–80; Eric Blanc, *Revolutionary Social Democracy: Working-Class Politics Across the Russian Empire (1882–1917)* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2021).

3. By the turn of the century in Łódź the proportion of Poles (according to language classification) reached 46%, while Germans made up to 21% and Jewish population 29%, for Warsaw the census data indicate almost 58 % Catholics, 35 % Jews and only 3% of Evangelic Christians. In many smaller cities Jews made up to 30% of the inhabitants. See Julian Janczak, "The National Structure of the Population in Łódź in the Years 1820-1938," *Polin*, no. 6 (1991): 25; Maria Nietyksza, *Ludność Warszawy na przełomie XIX i XX wieku* (Warszawa: Panstwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1971), 120.

4. For comparison, see Joseph Bradley, *Muzhik and Muscovite: Urbanization in Late Imperial Russia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Maria Nietyksza, *Rozwój miast i aglomeracji miejsko-przemysłowych w Królestwie Polskim, 1865–1914* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1986). On political impact of newcomers, ensuing tensions and political outcomes around the Bolshevik mobilization, see Leopold Haimson, *Russia's Revolutionary Experience: 1905–1917; Two Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005). On politics among Polish rural migrants, see for instance Anna Żarnowska, "Rural Immigrants and Their Adaptation to the Working-Class Community in Warsaw," in *Workers, Women, and Social Change in Poland, 1870–1939* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004).

5. Blobaum, *Rewolucja*; Wiktor Marzec, *Rising Subjects: The 1905 Revolution and the Origins of Modern Polish Politics* (Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020).

6. See analysis of Russian cities, Latvia and Georgia, respectively: Gerald Dennis Surh, *1905 in St. Petersburg: Labor, Society, and Revolution* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1989); Victoria E. Bonnell, *Roots of Rebellion: Workers' Politics and Organizations in St. Petersburg and Moscow, 1900–1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); Ernst Benz, *Die Revolution von 1905 in den Ostseeprovinzen Russlands: Ursachen und Verlauf der lettischen und estnischen Arbeiter- und Bauernbewegung im Rahmen der ersten russischen Revolution* (Mainz: Universität Johannes Gutenberg, 1989); Stephen F. Jones, *Socialism in Georgian Colors: The European Road to Social Democracy, 1883–1917* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2005).

7. Leopold Haimson, "The Problem of Social Stability in Urban Russia, 1905–1917 (Part One)," *Slavic Review* 23, no. 4 (1964): 619–42, https://doi.org/10.2307/2492201.

8. On the political results of autocratic capitalism and social democratic strategy as a response, see, respectively, Tim McDaniel, *Autocracy, Capitalism, and Revolution in Russia* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1988); Blanc, *Revolutionary Social Democracy*.

9. See, for example, Andzrzej Garlicki, *Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej początki* (Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, 1996); Janusz Pajewski, *Budowa Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej: 1918-1926* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2007); Włodzimierz Mędrzecki, *Odzyskany śmietnik: jak radziliśmy sobie z niepodległością w II Rzeczypospolitej* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2022).

10. Michael S. Melancon and Alice K. Pate, eds., *New Labor History: Worker Identity and Experience in Russia, 1840–1918* (Bloomington, IN: Slavica Publishers, 2002).

11. Janina Kasprzakowa, *Ideologia i polityka PPS-Lewicy w latach 1907-1914* (Warszawa: Ksiażka i Wiedza, 1965); Teodor Ładyka, *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna (Frakcja Rewolucyjna) w latach 1906–1914* (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1972); Blanc, *Revolutionary Social Democracy.*

12. Anna Żarnowska, *Workers, Women, and Social Change in Poland, 1870-1939* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004); Marta Sikorska-Kowalska, "Polskie 'Marianny'. Udział kobiet w rewolucji 1905-1907 roku w świetle wydarzeń w Łodzi," in *Rewolucja 1905-1907 w Królestwie Polskim i w Rosji*, eds. Marek Przeniosło, Stanisław Wiech, and Barbara Szabat (Kielce: Wydawnictwo Akademii Świętokrzyskiej, 2005), 129–53; Paweł Samuś, "Kobiety w ruchu socjalistycznym Królestwa Polskiego w latach rewolucji 1905–1907," *Rocznik Łódzki* LVI (2009): 85–115; Yedida S. Kanfer, "Łódź: Industry, Religion, and Nationalism in Russian Poland, 1880–1914" (Yale University, 2011); Kamil Śmiechowski, Marta Sikorska-Kowalska, and Kenshi Fukumoto, *Robotnicy Łodzi drugiej połowy XIX wieku. Nowe perspektywy badawcze* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2016).

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13. Elżbieta Kaczyńska, *Dzieje robotników przemysłowych w Polsce pod zaborami* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1970); Anna Żarnowska, *Klasa robotnicza Królestwa Polskiego, 1870–1914* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1974).
14. Paweł Samuś, *Wasza kartka wyborcza jest silniejsza niż karabin, niż armata…: z dziejów kultury politycznej na ziemiach polskich pod zaborami* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2013); Marta Sikorska-Kowalska, *"Wolność, czy zbrodnia?": rewolucja 1905–1907 roku w Łodzi na łamach gazety "Rozwój"* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2012); Kamil Śmiechowski, "Searching for a Better City: An Urban Discourse during the Revolution of 1905 in the Kingdom of Poland," *Praktyka Teoretyczna* 3, no13 (2014): 71–96, https://doi.org/10.14746/pt.2014.3.4; Agata Zysiak et al., *From Cotton and Smoke: Łódź – Industrial City and Discourses of Asynchronous Modernity 1897–1994* (Łódź; Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego; Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2018).
15. As it was done for the "mainland" Russia, for a summary overview, see Leopold Haimson, "'The Problem of Political and Social Stability in Urban Russia on the Eve of War and Revolution' Revisited," *Slavic Review* 59, no. 4 (2000): 848–75, https://doi.org/10.2307/2697422. On the imperial Rule in the Kingdom, see Malte Rolf, *Imperial Russian Rule in the Kingdom of Poland, 1864–1915*, trans. Cynthia Klohr, Russian and East European Studies (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2021).
16. On the idea of eventful mobilizations, see William Sewell, "Historical Events as Transformations of Structures: Inventing Revolution at the Bastille," *Theory and Society* 25, no. 6 (1996): 841–81. This idea was later applied to nationalism in Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996). For an empirical analysis based on eventful loyalties, see Brendan Karch, *Nation and Loyalty in a German-Polish Borderland: Upper Silesia, 1848–1960* (Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
17. Henryk Jabłoński, *Narodziny Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej* (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1962), 180.
18. Circumscribing a contentious event as an analytical unit, these researchers propose to disentangle mobilization, actors and trajectories. We elastically adopted these guidelines to the specificities of our research material. See Doug McAdam, Sidney G. Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 34.
19. Charles Tilly, *Regimes and Repertoires* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 33.
20. Edward Shorter and Charles Tilly, *Strikes in France, 1830-1968* (London, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1974).
21. See especially Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 15. For an attempt to use this perspective to the Russian plebeian experience, see Ilya Gerasimov, *Plebeian Modernity: Social Practices, Illegality, and the Urban Poor in Russia, 1906–1916* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2018).
22. The procedure was composed of initial searches in the online search engine to choose the archival units, later they were manually searched and photographed if relevant. In the next step, looking through the photographed folders one by one we constructed a table listing the events (containing a brief description, identification of actors and there number, classification of claims and their results (if known). Such a table was later uploaded to the qualitative analysis software (QDA Miner) and additionally coded to extract more synthetic patterns. I used this database, referring to original documents for details, while writing this article.
23. An example may be found in Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Sankt Petersburg (RGIA), f. 23, o. 19, d. 335.
24. Kasprzakowa, *Ideologia i polityka PPS-Lewicy w latach 1907–1914*; Paweł Samuś, *Dzieje SDKPiL w Łodzi 1893–1918* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1984).
25. Blobaum, *Rewolucja*; Marzec, *Rising Subjects*; Rolf, *Imperial Russian Rule in the Kingdom of Poland, 1864–1915*.
26. Richard D. Lewis, "Labor-Management Conflict in Russian Poland: The Lodz Lockout of 1906–1907," *East European Quarterly* VII, no. 4 (1974): 413–34.
27. Śmiechowski, Sikorska-Kowalska, and Fukumoto, *Robotnicy Łodzi drugiej połowy XIX wieku. Nowe perspektywy badawcze*, 95–99.
28. For instance an owner of a brush factory in Łomża Gubernia took the example of Łódź factory and using the New Year's eve (and perhaps the winter hardship) as a pretext to restart the factory and reverse the revolutionary gains, he announced his own petty lockout, see Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii, Moscow (GARF), f. 102, op. 118. 4-e deloproizvodstvo 1909, 38ch. 2.

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29. A picture emerging from the Warsaw-centered perspective is presented in Rolf, *Imperial Russian Rule in the Kingdom of Poland, 1864–1915*.
30. Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi (APŁ), Zarząd Żandarmerii Guberni Piotrkowskiej (ZŻGP), sygn. 456, k. 3; Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie (APL), Kancelaria Gubernatora Lubelskiego, sygn. 11893, k. 12; Władysław L. Karwacki, *Łódzka organizacja PPS-Lewicy 1906–1918* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1964), 164.
31. Ładyka, *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna (Frakcja Rewolucyjna) w latach 1906–1914*; Waldemar Potkański, *Terroryzm na usługach ugrupowań lewicowych i anarchistycznych w Królestwie Polskim do 1914 roku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2014).
32. Wiktor Marzec, "Performing and Remembering Personal Nationalism among Workers in Late Russian Poland," in *Emotions and Everyday Nationalism in Modern European History*, ed. Andreas Stynen, Maarten Van Ginderachter, and Xosé M. Núñez Seixas, Routledge Studies in Modern European History (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2020), 84–106.
33. For the extension of this argument, see Robert Blobaum, "Królestwo Polskie między rewolucją i wojną: Może nie było aż tak źle?" *Historyka: Studia metodologiczne*, vol. XXVIII, no. 28 (1998): 139–46.
34. Władysław L. Karwacki, *Związki zawodowe i stowarzyszenia pracodawców w Łodzi (do roku 1914)* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1972).
35. "Czerwony Sztandar", 17st of March 1909, see as well "Przeglad Socjademokratyczny", 1st of December 1909 for an explicit "1905 Revolution" formulation.
36. Archiwum Państwowe w Kielcach (APK), Kancelaria Gubernatora Kieleckiego, sygn. 1990, k. 65–67, 85–86.
37. APŁ, ZŻGP, sygn. 455, k. 14–15, 17–19.
38. APŁ, ZŻGP, sygn. 456, k. 1–2.
39. APK, Tymczasowy Generał Gubernator Guberni Kieleckiego, sygn. 54, k. 1–2.
40. APŁ, ZŻGP, sygn. 456, k. 6.
41. APL, KGL, sygn. 11,958, k. 1–3.
42. Archiwum Państwowe w Warszawie, oddział Grodzisk Mazowiecki (APW OGM), Zarząd Żandarmerii Powiatów Grójeckiego i Bońskiego, sygn. 201, k. 78.
43. Archiwum Państwowe w Warszawie, oddział Milanówek, APW OM, Zarząd Żandarmerii Powiatu (ZŻP) Warszawskiego, Mińsko-Mazowieckiego i Radzymińskiego, sygn. 383, k. 96–97.
44. APW OM, ZŻP Warszawskiego, Mińsko-Mazowieckiego i Radzymińskiego, sygn. 383, k. 141–142, 144.
45. For the Russian context, it has been argued (for instance in Pearl, Creating a Culture of Revolution.) that all the parties used the same literature and agitation techniques and that on the shop floor most of the radical workers cooperated and considered themselves rather radical workers as such than adherents of a particular program. In the context researched here, however, there are evidence of the opposite. For instance a much telling "kite" from the tsarist prison is a well-elaborated exchange of arguments on the national question, the main bone of contention between socialist parties, see Archiwum Akt Nowych, Warsaw (AAN), APPS 305/II/60. Simply put, the attitude to the national aspiration was for the rank and file a more important topic as the principle of party organization. Also autobiographers give much space to justify party affiliations, see Marzec, *Rising Subjects*.
46. See respectively Ładyka, *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna (Frakcja Rewolucyjna) w latach 1906–1914*; Georg W. Strobel, *Die Partei Rosa Luxemburgs, Lenin und die SPD: Der polnische "europäische" Internationalismus in der russischen Sozialdemokratie* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1974); Kasprzakowa, *Ideologia i polityka PPS-Lewicy w latach 1907–1914*; and for the pan-imperial comparison of fluctuating party tacktics in respect to mass movement and labor unions Blanc, *Revolutionary Social Democracy*.
47. Karwacki, *Związki zawodowe i stowarzyszenia pracodawców w Łodzi (do roku 1914)*; Laura Crago, "The 'Polishness' of Production: Factory Politics and the Reinvention of Working-Class National and Political Identities in Russian Poland's Textile Industry, 1880–1910," *Slavic Review* 59, no. 1 (2000): 16–41.
48. RGIA, f. 23, op. 19, d. 335, l.5; f. 1405, op. 440, d. 8179, l. 7; 318, f. 23, op. 19, d. 335, 318, f. 1405, op. 440, d. 8179.
49. Rodney H. Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free: Medieval Peasant Movements and the English Rising of 1381*, Nachdr. (London: Routledge, 2005), 139; Georges Lefebvre, *The Great Fear of 1789: Rural Panic in Revolutionary France* (New York: Schocken Books, 1989), 43.
50. Żarnowska, "Rural Immigrants and Their Adaptation to the Working-Class Community in Warsaw."

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51. The open air meetings were considered to dangerous for party work, see for instance Archiwum Głowne Akt Dawnych, Warsaw (AGAD), Pomocnik Warszawskiego Generał-Gubernatora do spraw policyjnych, 1/248/0/-/193, k. 14.
52. APŁ, Zarząd Żandarmerii Guberni Kaliskiej (ZŻGK), sygn. 435, k. 1, 3. This dynamic reapears perpetually. See also information on another planned "Easter" strike in Zduńska Wola in 1913, APŁ, ZŻGK, sygn. 440, k. 1.
53. A leaflet of the "national circle of teachers", APW OGM, ZŻP Grójeckiego i Bońskiego, sygn. 201, k. 59.
54. APW OGM, ZŻP Łowickiego, Sochaczewskiego, Skierniewickiego i Kutnowskiego, sygn. 208 – zestawienie 1913 r, k. 5.
55. APŁ, ZŻGP, sygn. 467, k. 82–83.
56. Paweł Korzec, ed., *źródła do dziejów rewolucji 1905-1907 w okręgu łódzkim, tom 1, cz. 2* (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1958), 123.
57. Marzec, *Rising Subjects*, 60.
58. For comparison in Indian context, see Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, 137.
59. APL, KGL, sygn. 11327, k. 85.
60. APW OGM, ZŻP Łowickiego, Sochaczewskiego, Skierniewickiego i Kutnowskiego, sygn. 121 – Sprawozdanie 1909, k. 110, 135.
61. Archiwum Państwowe w Płocku (APP), ZŻP Włocławskiego, Nieszawskiego i Gostynińskiego, sygn. 210, k. 15–16.
62. APW OGM, ZŻP Powiatów Grójeckiego i Bońskiego, sygn. 187, k. 17–18.
63. Alf Lüdtke, ed., *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1995), 313.
64. John D. Klier and Shlomo Lambroza, eds., *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
65. GARF, f. 217, d. 280, k. 17 and 435.
66. GARF, f. 102, op.119. 4-e deloproizvodstvo, 1910, 8ch. 2. On bakers's strikes and their coordination in earlier period, see also Olbrzymek, "Wspomnienia starego robotnika 1893–1918," *Z pola walki*, no. 3 (1927).
67. GARF, f. 102, op.122. 4-e deloproizvodstvo, 1913, 8ch. 2.
68. See Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, 4.
69. This argument is loosely inspired by Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason* (London; New York: Verso, 2005).
70. APŁ, ZŻGP, sygn. 466, k. 32.
71. APW OM, ZŻP Warszawskiego, Mińsko-Mazowieckiego i Radzymińskiego, sygn. 384, k. 198–210, 217–218.
72. Żarnowska, "Rural Immigrants and Their Adaptation to the Working-Class Community in Warsaw."
73. APŁ, ZŻGP, sygn. 470, k.115–116.
74. On the notion of imperial situation denoting multidimensional, patterned diversity and dependence, see Ilya Gerasimov et al., "In Search of a New Imperial History," *Ab Imperio*, no. 1 (2005): 33–56.
75. A good example is certain Koźmiński in the Biedermann's factory in Łódź, see Andreas R. Hofmann, "The Biedermanns in the 1905 Revolution: A Case Study in Entrepreneurs' Responses to Social Turmoil in Łódź," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 82, no. 1 (2004): 27–49. More on factory nationalism, see Crago, "The 'Polishness' of Production."
76. APŁ, ZŻGP, sygn. 456, k. 12–13.
77. APŁ, ZŻGK, sygn. 440, k. 58, 61.
78. APŁ, KGP, sygn. 121, k. 146–165.
79. GARF, f. 102, op.120, 4-e deloproizvodstvo 1911, 8ch. 2.
80. See for instance GARF, f. 102, op.121, 4 d. 1912, 8ch. 9; for a broader context see Robert Blobaum, "The Politics of Antisemitism in Fin-de-Siècle Warsaw," *The Journal of Modern History* 73, no. 2 (2001): 275–306.
81. Archiwum Państwowe w Radomiu (APR), Kancelaria Gubernatora Radomskiego, sygn. 3230, k. 77.
82. On the imagined community of nation constructed by print, see Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London; New York: Verso, 2006).
83. Editorial commentary on this issue in SDKPiL's journal see *Czerwony Sztandar* no 23 (1905), note on p. 9.

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85. Charles Tilly, *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758–1834* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995), 347–349.
86. A laflet published by the SDKPiL, [Niech żyje strejk powszechny! Do wszystkich robotników m Warszawy. Towarzysze robotnicy!…], GARF, f. 1741, d. 18813, DO 56 t. 2/1913, l. 28b.
87. Michael S. Melancon, *The Lena Goldfields Massacre and the Crisis of the Late Tsarist State* (College Station: Texas University Press, 2006).
88. GARF, f.102, op.121, 4-e deloproizvodstvo 1912, 8ch. 2; GARF, f. 662, d. 115, p. 12; 29; GARF, f. 1665, d. 62.
89. Ibid.
90. The fact that it was a railway junction on the core Warsaw-Vienna line, which testifies to the role of railways in fostering broader networks, see GARF, f. 102, op. 121, 4-e deloproizvodstvo 1912, 51ch. 2.
91. Haimson, *Russia's Revolutionary Experience: 1905–1917; Two Essays*.
92. APW OM, ZŻP Warszawskiego, Mińsko-Mazowieckiego i Radzymińskiego, sygn. 340, k. 108–116.
93. GARF, f. 102, op. 121. 4-e deloproizvodstvo 1912, 8ch. 2; see also a less spectacular case a year earlier, GARF, f. 217, d. 280, p. 473.
94. GARF, f. 1664., op.1., d. 57, subfolder 29 and the leaflet [Bracia Rodacy, Prześladowania naszego ruchu,–…], Redakcja "Polski", p. 36.
95. GARF, f. 102, op. 123. 4-e deloproizvodstvo 1914, 8 ch. 2.
96. Haimson, "'The Problem of Political and Social Stability in Urban Russia on the Eve of War and Revolution' Revisited."
97. Jane Burbank, "An Imperial Rights Regime. Law and Citizenship in the Russian Empire," *Kritika* 7, no. 3 (2006): 401.
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99. Frederick C. Giffin, "The Formative Years of the Russian Factory Inspectorate, 1882-1885," *Slavic Review* 25, no. 4 (1966): 641–50.
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101. Madhavan K Palat, "Casting Workers as an Estate in Late Imperial Russia," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 8, no. 2 (2007): 307–48, https://doi.org/10.1353/kri.2007.0028.
102. APW OM, Warszawski Gubernialny Zarząd Żandarmerii (WGZŻ), sygn. 3011, k. 128–137, 139, 143–144.
103. APW OM, WGZŻ, sygn. 3011, k. 154–157, 159–160.
104. A masterful analysis of the complex interaction between workers, owners and mediating authorities, similar to the one registered here, was presented in Reginald E. Zelnik, *Law and Disorder on the Narova River the Kreenholm Strike of 1872* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
105. APW OM, ZŻP Warszawskiego, Mińsko-Mazowieckiego i Radzymińskiego, sygn. 443, k. 22–27.
106. Joshua A. Sanborn, *Imperial Apocalypse: The Great War and the Destruction of the Russian Empire* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), chapter 1.
107. Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: The Campaign against Enemy Aliens during World War I* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2003); a synthetic account of the impact of War on the Polish lands and loyalties may be found in Maciej Górny, "A Century of Selective Ignorance: Poland 1918–2018," *Slavic Review* 78, no. 3 (2019): 654–62, https://doi.org/10.1017/slr.2019.227.
108. Steve Wright, *Storming Heaven: Class Composition and Struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism* (London; Sterling, Va: Pluto Press, 2002), 3–5; For an overview, see Frederick Harry Pitts, "Contemporary Class Composition Analysis: The Politics of Production and the Autonomy of the Political," *Capital & Class*, 2022, 030981682211392, https://doi.org/10.1177/03098168221139284.
109. Nietyksza, *Ludność Warszawy na przełomie XIX i XX wieku*, 135.
110. There was, once, a debate on the political consequences of radicalization of young workers in Russia and political consequences of inter-generational transfer and conflict, see Bonnell, *Roots of Rebellion*, 430–33; Haimson, "The Problem of Social Stability in Urban Russia, 1905–1917 (Part One)"; Haimson, *Russia's Revolutionary Experience*.

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113. Jesse Kauffman, *Elusive Alliance: The German Occupation of Poland in World War I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015); Górny, "A Century of Selective Ignorance."
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116. Kauffman, *Elusive Alliance*, chapter 3.
117. A leaflet of the Lublin PPS executive department, December 1917, AAN, PPS-R, 305/III/39, subfolder 2, p. 16.
118. [Do robotników wsi i do bezrolnych. Precz z sejmem. Niech żyją Rady Delegatów Robotniczych miast i wsi!], a leaflet of the Communist Workers' Party of Poland (KPRP), January 1919, Hoover Institution, Polish Collection, Box 1.

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