

Review of *Polska Dla Polakow! Kim Byli I Sa Polscy Narodowcy?* By Jolanta Mysiakowska-Muszynska, Wojciech Muszynski, and Marek Jan Chodakiewicz. 2015. Zysk i S-ka

Reviewer: Mr. Jan Peczkis

A One-Volume Encyclopedic Analysis of Polish Nationalism—Old and New. The Truth at Last. Endek Thinking is Demystified

POLAND FOR THE POLES! WHO WERE AND ARE THE POLISH NATIONALISTS? is the title of this Polish-language work. This tour de force is a comprehensive history of the Polish national movement, and it provides a much-needed corrective to the grotesque caricature, of Polish nationalism, that is routinely done by leftists and certain Jews. This work covers Polish nationalism from the days of Roman Dmowski, and then proceeds through Polish history all the way to the present. It is a somewhat frustrating item to review, as there is so much worthwhile information, and space to mention only a little of it.

Nationalism has been made into a naughty word by leftists. It is not. It is defined by the authors as an organization of society according to the principles of a shared language, culture, history, geographical locality, etc. It also includes a defense of national interests. (p. 11). [In addition, of course, there is a world of difference between emancipatory nationalism and imperialistic nationalism.]

MANY “EXTRAS” IN THIS WORK

The book, besides being jam-packed with information (notably biographical information) features many seldom-published photos of Polish nationalist rallies. The reader is reminded of the fact that, in the 1930s, the stiff-arm salute was widely used by anti-Communists at the time, all over Europe, and had no pro-Nazi connotations as it does today. In fact, the flat palm in the salute was a counter to the closed fist of the Communist salute. (pp. 131-132).

This work includes the texts of nationalist songs, and features reproductions of posters and brochures. For instance, one of them reminds the reader of Jewish-Soviet collaboration (as at Wlodawa, Wolkowysk, and Bialystok), during the pivotal 1920 Polish-Bolshevik War, as well as the camp at Jablonna (near Warsaw) for Jewish deserters from the Polish Army. (p. 136).

JAGIELLONIAN AND PIAST: A MUCH-EXAGGERATED DICHOTOMY

Conventionally, the nationalism envisioned by Pilsudski is regarded as of the Jagiellonian type (“inclusive”), whereas the nationalism envisioned by Dmowski is of the

Piast type (“exclusive”). This is, at best, an oversimplification. To begin with, the positions of Pilsudski and Dmowski, and their followers, were not set-in-stone ideologies. They were driven by specific events, and they evolved according to changing circumstances.

When Roman Dmowski expounded on the fact of his being part of the Polish nation, he was well aware of the fact that Jagiellonian Poland had consisted of many nationalities and religions. (pp. 32-33). The Endek movement had originated while Poland was under Partition, and Poles had to defend their very Polishness from the aggressive Russification and Germanization of the occupants. That is why the Endeks were “exclusivist”, and thought in terms of “Piast Poland.” (p. 57, 526).

One of the most commonly-heard leftist buzzwords, today, is "inclusion". On this basis, the reader should appreciate the fact that the Endeks had not excluded anyone from the Polish nation. Instead, the Jews, Germans, and—to a lesser extent—the Ukrainians, had first excluded themselves from Polishness through their overt separatism.

ETHNONATIONALISM AND INTEGRAL NATIONALISM--NOT ENDEK

Authors Chodakiewicz et al. repudiate integral nationalism, as it is a racist and state-deifying construct, and a criminal one. (pp. 13-14). Ethnonationalism is chauvinistic, and incompatible with Poland’s Catholic tradition. (pp. 527-528). They also contend that modern Polish nationalism should be of the Jagiellonian type. (p. 526).

Polish nationalist thinking, as exemplified by the SN (STRONNICTWO NARODOWE) was centered on Roman Catholicism as one of the main foundations of Polish national identity, and it soundly rejected Nazi-style racism. (p. 161). [There were a few Polish nationalist groups in existence, in the 1930’s, based on neo-paganism or National Socialism. However, their membership was negligible, and they soon disappeared. (pp. 206-208).]

Wincenty Lutoslawski, a leading Endek thinker decisively said, in 1939, that a Pole can be of Jewish, Gypsy (Sinti and Roma), Armenian, German, or Tatar origin. Even an African-American (in modern parlance) or American Indian (Native American, in modern parlance) can become a Pole. (p. 5; See also pp. 17-18). Consider the pedigrees of some Polish nationalist leaders. For example, Roman Dmowski was of Tatar descent (p. 35), and Wojciech Wasiutynski was of Jewish background. (p. 22). This was no anomaly. Various Polish nationalist organizations long had the habit of accepting certain “Poles of Jewish background” as valid Poles. (p. 27). So much for the myth of Endek ethnonationalism!

Now consider religion. The central role of Roman Catholicism, in Polish national identity, does not mean that other religions were, according to Endek opinion, unwelcome under

the rubric of Polishness—to the contrary. The Endeks recognized Polish Protestants, Uniates, and Muslims as valid Poles, but did not accept those currently practicing Judaism as Poles. (p. 21, 29). [The reader should remember that, unlike most other religions, the Jewish religion ITSELF has connotations of nationality (e. g, “Next year in Jerusalem!”). In fact, until recent times, diaspora Jews thought of themselves as situated among the GOYIM (gentile nations) but not OF them. As Jews became secularized, this increasingly gave way to politicized forms of Jews as nationality (Bundism and Zionism).]

POLISH-JEWISH RELATIONS: ENDEKS AND JEWS

During the 1905 Revolution, a considerable number of Jews fought in the ranks of the proto-Communist SDKPiL, and engaged in the slayings of Endeks. The Endeks eventually conducted retaliatory killings. (pp. 77-81).

Now consider the 1912 Duma elections. The usual criticisms, nowadays, of Roman Dmowski, for launching a boycott against the Jews, leave out crucial facts. The Jewish electoral action that had provoked the boycott was no innocent little game. It had put an anti-Polish socialist [Jagiello] in power. In addition, the boycott was hardly some sort harsh, unusual, or anti-Jewish act. In fact, it was the Jews who had started the boycott process in the first place. In 1907, Jews had enjoined fellow Jews to boycott Polish doctors. In 1909, the Jews broke a Polish boycott, of German goods in the Russian occupied part of Poland, by supporting the Germans—another enemy of Poland. (p. 133).

We now move on to interwar Poland. Boycotts of Jewish shops were deemed necessary in order to rein-in Jewish privilege, to break the Jewish economic hegemony over Poland, and to create business opportunities for Poles, who were otherwise kept out of entrepreneurship, and locked in poverty. (e. g, p. 134, 161). [Nowadays, in the USA, this process of discrimination against a more successful group, in favor of a less-successful group, is called affirmative action.] It should be stressed that Endek actions were not just anti-someone, but also FOR the Pole. This included the promotion of Polish commerce (p. 141) and numerous other affirmative forms of nation-building. (p. 123).

As for the universities, the numerus clausus, numerus nullus, and ghetto benches came about because Jews were much overrepresented at Poland’s universities. This not only denied a university education to many Poles including underprivileged ones (p. 148), but also meant that Poland’s elite would continue to have too many Jews, whose ways were generally foreign to Polish ones, and who were prone to act not in accordance with Polish interests. (p. 134).

Julian Tuwim had attacked Poland in his writings (and later became openly

Communist). No wonder that he had earned an unfavorable opinion among Polish patriots. (p. 24).

Nowadays, some marginal Polish nationalists try to ferret out the alleged Jewish origins of Poles—including even the likes of Lech Walesa. Ironically, during the interwar period, it was the leftists and mainstream Jews that tried to unmask the Jewish origin of certain Polish nationalists! (p. 22, 24). This was futile on its face, as the Endeks never adhered to any Nazi-style belief of Jews as a race.

THE ENDEKS DURING WWII

Very many Endeks perished during and after WWII, at the hands of the Germans and the Soviets. Others found themselves exiled in the West.

During the German occupation, the Endeks refused Nazi enticements to remove Jewish lawyers. (pp. 239-240). Later, quite a few Endeks gave their lives while trying to save fugitive Jews. (pp. 236-on).

The BRYGADA SWIETOKRZYSKA is well-known for its adventures. Contrary to Communist propaganda, it never fought on the side of the Germans. In fact, it waged combat against the Germans, and later resisted German enticements to make it part of the Waffen SS, for use against the Red Army. A small group, led by Captain “Tom”, accepted German training in parachute jumping, as a time-stalling tactic (with just several weeks left for the existence of the Third Reich.) The unit was parachuted into Soviet-ruled Poland, but was under no German directives. (p. 269).

PALEO-ENDEKS AND NEO-ENDEKS

For purpose of reference (and not terms generally used by the participants), Chodakiewicz et al. refer to paleo-Endeks as those Polish nationalists who remembered Poland before WWII, and neo-Endeks as those who, based in part on a revival of interest in the ideas of Roman Dmowski (p. 364), became nationally active in the 1970’s and especially the 1980’s. (p. 368).

After the post-Stalin “thaw” of 1956, some of the paleo-Endeks in Poland became more visible—only to experience renewed repression. A few named individuals bravely persisted in their activism despite renewed arrests and other difficulties.

Some of the émigré and local paleo-Endeks, faced with the reality that Communism in Poland was “permanent”, and sobered by the Soviet military repressions of 1956 and 1968, softened their anti-Communism, and advocated some form of modus vivendi with the Soviet-imposed Communist puppet government. (p. 359).

Of course, the paleo- and neo-Endek distinction is only general. For instance, one could think of Edward Staniewski (1929-2009) who, by virtue of his age and life experiences, was a paleo-Endek. However, his style of independent thinking and action, and his readiness to form alliances with people having different opinions from his own, was more characteristic of a neo-Endek. (p. 398).

The generational difference between paleo- and neo-Endeks was sometimes counterintuitive. That is, the members of the older generation could be more radical, whereas the youth could partake of ossified 1930s-style thinking. (p. 367).

The neo-Endeks, unlike some of the paleo-Endeks, generally rejected any hope of reforming Communism. They affirmed the fact that Germany could potentially once again be an enemy of Poland, but also rejected the Communist-advanced notion that the USSR was the guarantee of the permanence of Poland's western border with Germany. (p. 368).

THE SOLIDARITY ERA

The neo-Endeks eventually became part of the Solidarity movement and--as the Real Poles—clashed with the largely-Jewish leftist-secularist KOR (KOMITET OBRONY ROBOTNIKOW) element. (p. 366, 368, 403, pp. 409-410). The latter came to embody the left-wing of the Solidarity movement, and its best-known member was Adam Michnik vel Szechter [who remains unrepentant for the crimes of his Communist father and brother to this day.] According to one former KOR member, were it not for Jaruzelski's imposition of martial law in 1981, the Solidarity movement would probably eventually have split up—into the national-Catholic group and the Jewish-secularist-leftist group. (p. 409). [The long-term antipathy towards Polish patriotism and Catholicism, of the original KOR element, lives on, to this day, under the auspices of the leftist and Judeocentric GAZETA WYBORCZA.]

CONTEMPORARY LEFTIST TACTICS IN ACTION

Authors Chodakiewicz et al. (pp. 304-305) point out that today's leftists and neo-Stalinists misrepresent Boleslaw Piasecki and his PAX, as an example of the Communists trying to revive pre-WWII Endek nationalism, or even of being Endek nationalists themselves! Against this nonsense, we must realize that the Communists had merely recruited Piasecki for propaganda purposes, that the Communists never had anything other than enmity against Polish patriotism, and that Piasecki had been an opportunist who had supported whatever was in vogue.

Today, leftists zero-in on marginal groups (e. g, a few Polish skinheads, and what may be called "lumpen-Endeks") and propagandize them as representative components of the Polish national movement. (p. 470, 472). It is an obvious smear tactic.

Nowadays, the presumed unique evil of the Holocaust is used by leftists to falsely associate Nazism with the political right, and thereby to form a guilt-by-association for all rightists, including modern ones. The Holocaust is also used as a weapon, by left-wingers, for attacking Polish patriotic traditions and the Catholic Church. In addition, the monolithic focus on the Holocaust serves to deflect attention away from Communist crimes. (p. 525).

POLISH NATIONALISM TODAY

The modern Polish national movement is hardly a singularity. It is allied with similar movements in Europe, notably Jobbik in Hungary. (p. 484).

One goal of the movement is to abolish the Round Table agreements and finally to end the harmful legacy of Communism. (p. 480). The long-taboo ZOLNIERZE WYKLECI (anti-Communist Polish freedom-fighting guerrillas) are finally honored, and the day to commemorate them has been set aside as March 1st. (p. 486).

There are many Polish nationalist activists. One of the most dynamic and popular of these is historian and publicist Leszek Zebrowski. (p. 441, 486-487, 494). Among classical Endeks, the works of Wojciech Wasiutynski especially continue to inspire young Polish nationalists. (pp. 390-393, 435, 440).

The first Independence Day march, in 2010, drew 5,000 marchers. In 2011, it was 20,000. In 2012 and 2013, there were 80,000 participants. (p. 480). Leftist counter-demonstrators tried to slander and physically assault the Polish patriots, but their hysterics have waned in recent years.

All indicators point to the Polish national movement growing in size and influence.

Polish Power! POLSKA SILA!