

Streszczenie pracy doktorskiej

Tradycje walk o niepodległość II RP w pamięci historycznej opozycji antykomunistycznej w PRL (1976–1989)

Traditions of the Fight for Independence of the Second Polish Republic in the Historical Memory of the Anti-Communist Opposition in the Polish People's Republic (1976–1989)

The topic of this dissertation concerns research on the history of the anti-communist opposition in the field of historical memory during the Polish People's Republic. The topic arose from the doctoral student's interests in the history of the armed struggle for Poland's independence in the first two decades of the 20th century.

The author of this dissertation deepened his interest in the period of the struggle for Poland's independence and the figures associated with it in the years preceding his higher education. In 2008, his first original brochure was published, popularizing Józef Piłsudski's connections with Druskininkai. While still a student, a second, popularizing book was published, this time about the Marshal's stay in Madeira. In addition to brochures and books, he also published articles on topics such as the Polish Legions. During his master's studies, the author first turned his attention to the anti-communist opposition of 1976–1989. He explored the interpretation of the history of the Polish struggle for independence in the first two decades of the 20th century by members of that opposition. This interest resulted in a popularizing publication highlighting the memory of Józef Piłsudski in the activities of oppositionists in the Polish People's Republic.

This interest enabled him to define the scope of his research and the topic of his condensed dissertation, encompassing a broader spectrum of issues not only related to the Marshal's presence in opposition activities, but also to the specific events with which Piłsudski was broadly associated.

Numerous publications have been written on the period of Poland's independence, describing, among other things, the life and work of Józef Piłsudski, the history of the Polish Legions, Poland's regaining of independence on November 11, 1918, and the period of the

Polish-Soviet War and the Battle of Warsaw on August 15, 1920. However, there are few studies that address these issues in greater detail, specifically those concerning the memory of these issues in subsequent years of Poland's modern history, specifically in the activities of the anti-communist opposition in the Polish People's Republic.

In recent years, Polish literature on the anti-communist opposition has been primarily composed of works by researchers from the Institute of National Remembrance. These primarily concern the history of the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity" and introduce the reader to a broad spectrum of issues related to the history of the Union—often previously unknown or poorly researched, including regional aspects. Publications from the European Solidarity Centre and the KARTA Centre are also important elements in understanding the history of the anti-communist opposition in the Polish People's Republic.

The chronological framework of this work covers the years 1976–1989. Due to the need to present the genesis of the development of the opposition in Poland after World War II, the lower bounds slightly extend beyond the accepted dates. A few sentences are also devoted to attempts to invoke the traditions of the Second Polish Republic during the occupation of 1939–1945. The 1976 caesura stems from the beginnings of the opposition's development following the workers' protests in Płock, Ursus, and Radom in June of that year. The analysis focused primarily on publications published until 1989, even though some editorial offices ceased publishing in 1990. The chronology of the topic ends in 1989 due to the legal end of the People's Republic of Poland, which is usually dated December 31, 1989. It should be remembered, however, that the actual end of anti-communist opposition activities in the Polish People's Republic should be placed in 1990. Some underground press titles printed their last issues as late as 1990. In July 1990, the Security Service, which had conducted repressive activities against the opposition almost until the end of its existence, was liquidated. Among other things, it was only at the beginning of this year that the Security Service (SB) concluded its operations as part of the "Octopus" Operational Case, directed against Fighting Solidarity. Some researchers consider the transfer of the insignia of power to the Second Polish Republic after the general presidential elections held in the fall of 1990 to be the symbolic end of the Polish People's Republic and the communist system in the country.

The author of this dissertation focused on the issue of non-public-sector publishing, which has also been the subject of numerous monographs. These publications primarily concern the publishing system, profiles of activists, authors, and the history of individual press titles. However, research on the content of texts (especially those concerning Polish history) published

in underground circulation is not very advanced. Various authors have examined this issue fragmentarily, despite the fact that many significant works on the democratic opposition in the Polish People's Republic, particularly those concerning underground circulation, have already been published.

During the library research, it was noted that issues related to the period of the struggle for Polish independence were marginalized in the activities of the opposition in the Polish People's Republic, often only briefly mentioned. No comprehensive research has been observed on the functioning of the struggle for the independence of the Second Polish Republic in the activities of the Polish People's Republic opposition or in non-publicist publications. However, the literature on the subject contains few publications on the significance and role of history in the activities of the anti-communist opposition.

The author took on the challenge of filling at least part of this research gap, aware that he would not be able to analyze all the collected sources. This was partly because – as the doctoral thesis attempted to outline – there was no need to duplicate materials, for example, those related to anniversary celebrations, which usually dealt with the same event in Polish history. It should be noted here that the primary research material was the press and monographs published underground. When examining press published uncensored in the Polish People's Republic, it is important to remember that this is a very specific research material. Underground publications varied in format – from standard book sizes to smaller pamphlets. There were even pocket-sized versions of publications, which inevitably makes the material under study difficult to read (this is particularly true of some underground press due to the duplication technique). Furthermore, it should be noted that they were published in small print runs, making them difficult to obtain today.

The most popular pre-war national holiday commemorated and celebrated by the opposition in the Polish People's Republic was Independence Day. Scholars of modern history have often highlighted the significance of November 11, 1918, in independent activities after World War II. However, the broader significance of August 6, 1914 (the march of the Cadre), or even August 15, 1920, for the opposition has not been considered in the literature. Instead, the focus has been on the image of Józef Piłsudski in the Solidarity underground, but only in a general sense, without in-depth analysis. Individual issues were therefore only briefly mentioned. These aspects led to the identification of a significant research gap. Therefore, the author of the dissertation aimed to collect as much material as possible and discuss the memory of the armed struggle for independence from the broadest perspective possible.

This dissertation attempted to encompass all aspects of the history of the struggle for independence, the construction and defense of Poland's borders in the years 1914–1921, as reflected in the historical memory of the opposition in the Polish People's Republic between 1976 and 1989. The research questions, based on independent press materials, publications, and historiography, enabled the formulation of the following research hypothesis: historical memory of Polish history, in this case primarily the glorious moments of Polish arms in the struggle for independence and the borders of the Second Polish Republic, transmitted through the underground press and other activities, was of paramount importance to the daily functioning of the anti-communist opposition. Without such texts and other initiatives, the opposition in the Polish People's Republic could not have pursued its most important and shared goal – the pursuit of freedom. The topics explored also influenced public attitudes, fostering patriotism and a sense of pride in the achievements of previous generations.

This dissertation also attempts to demonstrate, among other things, that Piłsudski has been associated for generations with independence, the fight for it, and with formations participating in the struggle for freedom, such as the Polish Legions. This issue is examined in detail in the context of the myth-building surrounding the Commander of the First Brigade of the Legions in the Second Polish Republic. It was also worthwhile to delve more broadly into the phenomenon of remembering the fight for Poland's freedom during World War I and its immediate aftermath, as observed in the opposition's activities in the Polish People's Republic. In particular, it was necessary to address the role of the underground publishing industry in evoking this knowledge. The Marshal holds a special place in this dissertation, though not always a dominant one. This dissertation attempts to encompass the entire history of the struggle for independence, the construction, and the defense of Poland's borders from 1914 to 1921, as reflected in the historical memory of the opposition in the Polish People's Republic from 1976 to 1989.

The primary source base used to describe the research problem was underground publications. These included newspapers and non-censored publications. Ephemera, accounts, iconography, memoirs, and interviews with witnesses were also analyzed.

Some of the materials used in this dissertation are in the author's own collections, while others are held in archives and libraries, including those of the KARTA Center, the National Library, the Archives of Modern Records, and the Institute of National Remembrance. Websites were also consulted. Several useful sources were obtained from private individuals. During the research, the author utilized numerous research aids, including published bibliographies on

underground circulation in Poland and the list of such bibliographies on the Independence Movement Documentation Center website. Research in the IPN Archive, the Archives of Modern Records, and the ECS Archive was considered a supplement to the research.

It should be noted that some of the studies are also source materials. These primarily concern publications on Józef Piłsudski published between 1976 and 1989, both in official and unofficial circulation. Regardless of the nature of the scholarly, popular science, or journalistic studies, as well as their substantive value and degree of objectivity, they influenced, to a greater or lesser extent, the shaping of the Commander's image in the eyes of readers. They also—obviously—reflected the knowledge and views of the authors. The historiography analyzed during the research noted that, when writing about traditions adopted by various structures, the authors did not dwell on concepts such as "Piłsudski traditions" or "traditions of the Second Polish Republic."

It should be noted, however, that the author did not intend to provide a detailed verification—from the perspective of the current state of research—of the facts, dates of events, numbers, names and pseudonyms of individual authors, and other historical information in underground publications. Naturally, given the conditions and state of research at the time, much of it would require updated commentary. This does not mean, however, that the author did not, to the extent possible, supplement or correct some of the information provided by underground authors. He also tried to avoid entering into polemics with individual authors' interpretations of history, except in a few cases. Rather, the focus was on understanding and presenting what was written on a given topic between 1976 and 1989.

The aim of the study was also to analyze non-publicist publications devoted entirely to aspects of the struggle for Polish independence, or those in which these themes appeared among many others. During the research, as mentioned, in some cases it was impossible to determine the accuracy of the detailed information provided by individual editorial offices. However, where possible, the author attempted to update or expand on the material.

The source material on which the research was based came from, among others, the online archives of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) of independent press published outside the official circulation of the Polish People's Republic, and the online archives of the KPN. Press from the KARTA Center was also examined. The research covered several thousand pages from over 100 press titles and over 200 underground publications. The selection of material was based on a search for articles directly related to the issues, including anniversary

celebrations, commemorations, historical calendars, and biographical texts about figures related to the Polish struggle for independence. Articles containing ideological polemics, such as reviews of publications by other opposition members, were also analyzed. The ECS Archives focused on photographic collections.

The source material, however, consists primarily of independent press titles published without censorship during the period under review. A second group consists of second-hand publications. Documents of social life, such as calendars, postage stamps, leaflets, and posters printed during the period under review, are supplemented. Due to time constraints, it was decided to omit much of the material useful for approaching the topic from the perspective of both the underground and official press. The author hopes that this material will be useful in the future.

The doctoral student also conducted extensive library research. It's difficult to list all the authors here, but one of the most important works was undoubtedly the multi-volume *Encyclopedia of Solidarity: Opposition in the Polish People's Republic 1976–1989*, edited by Grzegorz Wołek and Grzegorz Majchrzak, among others. Of particular value in the context of research on the phenomenon of the multi-million-member movement is the seven-volume IPN work *NSZZ "Solidarność" 1980–1989*, edited by Łukasz Kamiński and Grzegorz Waligóra. This publication was prepared by over sixty authors. Also worthy of note is the publication *Opposition and Social Resistance in Poland after 1956*, edited by Tomasz Kozłowski and Jan Olaszek, which presents both factual studies describing the origins, course, and consequences of individual events at the national and regional levels, as well as problem-based and more theoretical texts.

An important element in understanding the history of the anti-communist opposition in the Polish People's Republic is the European Solidarity Centre's publication, *"Democratic Opposition in the Polish People's Republic 1976–1981,"* edited by Wojciech Polak, Jakub Kufel, and Przemysław Ruchlewski. This collection of studies examines various aspects of activities aimed at the political system of the Polish People's Republic in the second half of the 1970s and the early history of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity." The authors discuss the activities of the main opposition organizations, the actions of the party and police authorities of the Polish People's Republic against independent groups, and some aspects of the international conditions of the opposition's operation.

One of the most important institutions collecting, processing, and publishing materials on the history of the opposition is the KARTA Center. The Center's publication, "Opposition in the Polish People's Republic: A Biographical Dictionary 1956–89," edited by Jan Skórzyński, Paweł Sowiński, and Małgorzata Strasz, is particularly noteworthy. It compiles biographies accompanied by photographs and serves as a thoroughly researched source of information. Articles and information contained in underground publications were analyzed in relation to, among other things, political events in the Polish People's Republic. Their content enabled us to answer the research questions and draw the general conclusion that the primary goal of authors of independent publications on Poland's struggle for independence between 1914 and 1921 was to maintain the memory of the tradition of these struggles and to recall the true version of the events discussed. This, in turn, shaped the goal of some opposition activities, particularly the independence movement, which was to strive for freedom. Based on this, the dissertation highlights the importance of publications published without censorship directly concerning the armed struggle of Poles during World War I for independence and the subsequent defense of the borders of the Second Polish Republic.

As a result of the analysis of underground press articles and monographs, as well as historiography, the following research questions were posed: in which underground publications was the topic of Poland's struggle for independence between 1914 and 1921 present? What image of memory emerged from them? Which opposition organizations placed the greatest importance on commemorating this period in Polish history? What themes from the period of struggle for Poland's borders between 1914 and 1921 were most frequently written about? How were the most important figures involved in the construction of the Second Polish Republic's borders portrayed? How were the most important anniversaries related to the period of struggle for freedom commemorated within the opposition? How were issues related to the memory of that period discussed? What role did the history of the struggle for independence and the borders of the Second Polish Republic play in the activities of the anti-communist opposition? How often did articles on a specific topic appear in the underground press? What topics from the history of the struggle for independence and the borders of the Second Polish Republic were addressed by authors of articles in the press and underground publications, and which ones are not covered in these publications?

The research questions posed, the hypothesis adopted, and the source material used, the creation of which corresponds chronologically to the events discussed, influenced the adoption of specific research methods. One of these is the progressive method, which involves the use

of sources produced during the period under study, as well as those related to that period. In this dissertation, the author also utilized other research methods: deductive, inductive, geographical, comparative, and the silence of sources.

The dissertation employs a thematic and chronological structure. The first chapter introduces the complex process of the formation of organized anti-communist opposition in the Polish People's Republic. The author deemed it appropriate to discuss this topic, beginning with the final period of World War II. The main part of this chapter focuses on the structures of the emerging opposition and its key figures.

The dissertation concerns the activities of the anti-communist opposition in the Polish People's Republic. The first officially operating structure was established in response to the mass repression associated with the workers' strikes in June 1976, in cities including Ursus, Płock, and Radom. Following these events, the openly operating Workers' Defense Committee (KOR) was established. It was soon joined by the also officially active Movement for the Defense of Human and Civic Rights (ROPCiO), and subsequently by other organizations. These organizations published underground magazines and books, organized independent lectures, and organized patriotic demonstrations. The emergence of the democratic and independence opposition was not only linked to June 1976. The authorities' intention to amend the constitution of the Polish People's Republic to enshrine the party's leading role and its alliance with the Soviet Union also contributed. The election of Cardinal Karol Wojtyła as the new pope also fueled Poles' hopes for change in Poland. It is worth noting that John Paul II visited his homeland for the first time as head of the Catholic Church in June 1979.

Following the introduction of another price increase in the summer of 1980, spontaneous strikes erupted across the country. The most significant of these began on August 14th, when workers at the Gdańsk Shipyard stood up in defense of the dismissed Anna Walentynowicz. Subsequently, an Inter-Enterprise Strike Committee was formed in Gdańsk. A list of 21 demands was then presented to the communist authorities, the most important of which concerned the establishment of independent trade unions. The authorities began negotiations with the workers. Between August 30th and September 3rd, 1980, social agreements were signed in Szczecin, Gdańsk, Jastrzębie, and Dąbrowa Górnicza between the government and workers demanding their rights.

Despite attempts by the party to oppose them, structures of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity" were established across the country, with membership ranging from 8 to nearly 10 million. Peasant, student, and high school groups established their own organizations. Creative unions and associations began to operate again, and demands for pluralism and self-government were made. Even within the party itself, a kind of reformist movement could be observed.

The communist authorities immediately took action to crush the resistance. Since the autumn of 1980, they had been preparing a forceful solution, which was implemented on December 13, 1981, with the imposition of martial law. The Military Council of National Salvation, headed by General Wojciech Jaruzelski, seized power in the country. Borders were closed, strikes and demonstrations were banned, civil rights were restricted, and the Solidarity trade union and other independent organizations were dissolved. Thousands of activists were interned, and resistance was crushed by force.

Many organizations went underground. An independent underground society emerged, drawing inspiration from independence traditions. Alongside the Solidarity underground, a youth and student underground also operated. A large-scale "paper revolution" began, with thousands of independent magazines and books being published. An independent cultural movement emerged, encompassing visual art, theater, and music. Underground radio stations and cultural groups associated with the Church were also active. The Catholic Intelligentsia Clubs are also worth mentioning.

In the second half of the 1980s, the authorities recognized that reforms were necessary. Fearing an outbreak of social discontent, even some of the opposition were invited to discuss changes to the communist system. The Round Table Talks in 1989 initiated a process that resulted in the formation of a government headed by Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki.

Thus, after further elections and changes in key state positions, Poland embarked on a path toward freedom and democracy. The aspirations of opposition groups became a reality, and hopes for achieving their stated goals were taking shape.

In the first chapter, the author also discussed the involvement of world war veterans in independent activities. Veterans, individually or in organized ways, kept alive the memory of events related to the struggle for Polish independence, passing it on to subsequent generations of Poles.

Chapter two is devoted to the history of armed struggles for Polish independence as reflected in the historical memory of the opposition during World War I. The first part of the chapter discusses the First Cadre Company in the historical context described in underground publications, including the return to the tradition of the Marches on the Trail of the First Cadre Company, begun in the Second Polish Republic. The next part concerns the history of the Polish Legions in the context of the opposition's memory and activities. The main thrust of this part of the dissertation is a description of the opposition's celebration of the national holiday commemorating the regaining of independence on November 11, 1918. This anniversary was most frequently recalled by the editorial boards of underground newspapers. It was associated with the most important pre-war holiday and pointed to a clear goal for all – independence. It served as a reminder that all efforts in the fight and work for freedom are worthwhile. Therefore, many newspapers and publications touched on this topic. It was even more prominent in the press because of its conciliatory value. The topic could be found in many strands of writing – from the more left-wing, through liberal, Piłsudski-leaning, conservative, and nationalist. It was also discussed in writings from various opposition movements.

The third chapter addresses topics related to the memory of the defense of Lviv in 1918 and the Polish-Bolshevik War. An analysis of underground materials revealed a significant saturation with the topic of the 1918 battles for Lviv. The author did not anticipate significant opposition interest in the 1918 battles for Lviv, yet this event was recalled quite regularly, most often on November 1st. The texts also drew attention to the devastation of the Eaglets' Cemetery in 1971. Therefore, these texts generally focused on the Soviet authorities' approach to Polish national memorials. Independent publications also featured the history of Lviv as a reference point for the memory of the lost Eastern Borderlands. However, the most extensive section of the chapter concerns the presence of the Polish-Bolshevik War in opposition activities. This conflict was described from various perspectives. The anniversary of August 15th and the Battle of Warsaw were prominent. Independent authors also attempted to describe the ideas and concepts accompanying the war of 1919–1921, including the Second Polish Republic's Eastern policy. Texts about the war offered the opposition, above all, testimony to the nation's will to resist and to a possible victory over the then-enemy of Polish freedom – the communist system.

The final chapter presents the image of Józef Piłsudski in the opposition's activities. The Marshal's biography was crucial for understanding the need to fight for independence. His life story was of great importance to opposition members (it largely unified many ideological currents of the period), and it also influenced the consciousness of the opposition's youth. In

fact, until the end of the People's Republic of Poland, as other scholars of the history of the opposition emphasize, the Marshal's figure was evoked by many opposition members. This chapter also attempts to recall other officers and politicians of the Second Polish Republic who, for underground activists during the communist era, were particularly significant in shaping the ethos of the independence opposition (including General Edward Śmigły-Rydz and General Kazimierz Sosnkowski). The opposition press remains under-researched. The research undertaken may enable the introduction of new sources into scholarly circulation. They may be important in the context of an issue overlooked and often marginalized by researchers: the presence of independence struggles in the independent press. Analyzing these sources also allowed us to determine the true purpose of these publications and opposition activities during the Polish People's Republic. Besides the aspirations for freedom, an important goal was to increase public awareness.

While researching this topic, the author noted several issues that could be considered research proposals. It should be emphasized that in the analysis of party (PZPR) press titles, one could encounter an ideological and propaganda-driven perspective on this issue, significantly distorting an objective picture. Information contained in these publications may be inaccurate or intentionally omitted. However, the Polish People's Republic perspective in this context is worth comparing with the opposition perspective, which, in turn, often idealized individual figures and events.

Another essential element would be the emigration perspective. First and foremost, it would be necessary to analyze publications such as the London and American "Niepodległość" and "Zeszyty Historyczne" and the Paris-based "Kultura." Juxtaposing these three perspectives—the domestic opposition, the communist perspective, and the émigré perspective—would enable the construction of an objective account of the Polish struggle for independence in the early 20th century, presented between 1976 and 1989. This would undoubtedly confirm the opposition's, and likely émigré, response to the manipulation of Polish history by the communist authorities.

The author's research concluded, among other things, that opposition members' references to Polish history may not have been a primary focus of their discussions, but they certainly had a significant place within the independent movement. Historical memory, including that of the armed struggles of 1914–1921, gained importance over time, particularly within the pro-independence movement of the opposition, represented by organizations such as ROPCiO and KPN. This doesn't mean that topics related to recent history were not addressed

within the democratic movement (e.g., the Workers' Defense Committee), but they were more limited. For many opposition activists, history held significant significance. They were underground enthusiasts and repositories of the traditions and heritage of the Second Polish Republic.

Ultimately, it must be concluded that the opposition's activities undoubtedly contributed significantly to the overthrow of the communist system and the transformation of the political system in Poland. There is also no doubt that without basic historical knowledge, without recalling the most important pages from the history of the struggle for Polish independence in the first two decades of the 20th century, it would not be possible to engage in a discussion on the construction of a sovereign Poland after 1989.