



Poland, the tradition of publications which qualify as conspiratorial is long-standing and rich, and has been the subject of scientific research for decades. This label applies to both the 16th century Reformation prints, the 17th century minstrel literature and the socio-political writings on independence dating back to the partitions, as well as Nazi and Soviet occupations. In the 19th and 20th century, free and illegal publications were the source of alternative and credible information, and fulfilled an opinion-shaping role which should not be underestimated. Indeed, it served to promote patriotic attitudes and fostered political identity, as well as identification with the community of a stateless nation.

An independent publishing movement during the time of the People's Republic of Poland (PRL) drew on the experience of wartime and post-war conspiracy. Participation in this activity (editing, issuing and distributing printouts) was one of the main forms of resistance. This movement - illegal at the time - drew in thousands of Poles, both living in the country and those who emigrated.

It is estimated that between 1976 and 1990, almost 5.5 thousand underground journals and approximately 6.5 thousand book titles were published in Poland. It was a worldwide phenomenon. Volumes in which those publications were issued ranged from only several copies up to more than a fifty thousand. The initiative to break the party and state publishing monopoly involved independent and unregistered publishing houses established by private persons at grassroots. Their output was a sui generis attempt to "set the world straight", responding to the communist government's policy of indoctrinating and subjugating the society. The prints also served as an "antidote" to the authoritarian government's official discourse and its policy of disinformation. It should be pointed out that, in relative terms, access to underground publications in Poland was much more egalitarian when, for instance, compared to the situation in post-Soviet states.

The authorities made fruitless efforts to eliminate the publishing movement. Paper, typewriters, duplicating machines and printing equipment were all confiscated and destroyed.

People found cooperating with publishing houses and distributing journals were subjected to surveillance, persecution and imprisonment. The regime television broadcast regular updates on the Security Service's triumphs in closing down the "last" publishing houses hidden away in cramped flats and dank basements. In fact, the publishing movement flourished over the final 15 years of the PRL, despite periodic breaks, and the books banned by the censorship became a coveted and scarce commodity.



Conspiracy literature as a permanent and socially significant phenomenon was present between 1976 and 1989/1990. The second half of the 1970s saw the establishment of opposition organisations who objected to the state policy, were active in multiple fields, e.g. offering support to people who were persecuted in the aftermath of the events of June 1976. That time gave rise to the following organisations, respectively: Komitet Obrony Robotników (Workers' Defence Committee) (1976), Ruch Obrony Praw Człowieka i Obywatela (Human Rights and Citizen Protection Movement) (1977), Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej (Confederation for Independent Poland) (1979). The Workers' Defence Committee's "Komunikat" ("Communication") was first issued towards the end of September 1976, soon followed by "Biuletyn Informacyjny" ("Information Bulletin"), both published as typescripts. "U progu" ("At the doorstep") published in October 1976 by the



solidarność

independence strand was the first second-circulation journal printed using a duplication machine. "Robotnik" ("The Worker"), a journal whose title was a call back to the "Robotnik" by the Polish Socialist Party founded back in the 19th century, was first published in September 1977. August 1978 saw the emergence of another similarly named journal - "Robotnik Wybrzeża" ("The Coastline Worker"), published by Komitet Założycielski Wolnych Związków Zawodowych Wybrzeża (Coastline Free Trade Unions Founding Committee).

The opposition organisations published uncensored bulletins, journals, books and booklets whose volumes kept growing. The movement was bolstered by independent student and youth organisations. Attempts were also made to develop international co-operation, drawing from the experience of dissidents from the USSR and Czechoslovakia. However, over time the domestic second circulation developed on a scale exceeding that in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It did not take long for the Polish achievements on this front to become an inspiration to others, among them Hungarian dissidents.

Estimates show that between 1976 and 1980, the illegal publishing market in Poland featured about 150 illegal titles: independent news journals and various journalistic and literary publications. Publishing houses were set up which - apart from the low volume writings - also printed books: literature, journalist and scientific works. The most recognised and dynamic ones included: ABC, Biblioteka "Spotkań" (Library of "Meetings"), Biblioteka Historyczna i Literacka (History and Literature Library), Głos (Voice), Krakowska



Pismo Regionu Gdańskiego

Nr 34/64

Gdans

WIADCZE

Gdarisk, 16.03.82 r.

Do członków; NSZZ "Solidarność", Do: spo-łeczeństwa Regionu Gdańskiego.

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Minely ponad trzy miesiące od wprowedzenia w Polace staru wojemsyc. Opłyneżo więc
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Oficyna Studentów (Cracow Student Publishing House), Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza - NOWA (Independent Publishing House - NOWA), Niezależny Instytut Wydawniczy (Independent Publishing Institute), Wydawnictwo im. Konstytucji 3 Maja (Constitution of 3 May Publishing House), Wydawnictwo Młoda Polska (Young Poland Publishing House), Wydawnictwo Polskie (Polish Publishing House). There were at least 35 active independent publishing houses by 1980.

The massive development of the independent publishing movement did not take place before the establishment of "Solidarność" ("Solidarity") in 1980. Trade union journals began to appear in open circulation and in wholesale distribution. Although much of the materials printed before August disappeared, they were replaced by a slew of titles, not all of them published under the "Solidarity" brand. It only took a few months in 1980 to launch approximately 400 new non-permit journals. Establishment, industry press was developing. February 1981 saw the beginning of the Warsaw-based Krag which published books by such authors as: Simone Weil, Tadeusz Konwicki, Leszek Kołakowski, Krystyna Kersten and others. Overall, independent publishing houses brought

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out about 2 thousand titles during the time of the so-called "Solidarity carnival".

The situation changed when martial law was introduced. Based on the Announcement of implementing the martial law for reasons of national security: "it was forbidden to distribute any type of publications, printouts or information through any means, to hold artistic performances in public and to use any printing devices without first obtaining consent of a competent authority".

Despite political persecution of anti-communist resistance members, internments and arrests, the publishing movement continued to gain momentum. The Wrocław "Z Dnia na Dzień" ("Day to Day") and the Warsaw "Wiadomości" ("News") were launched. Between Autumn 1982 and the end of 1983 over 1000 new titles were coming out. The capital city information journals gained importance: "Tygodnik Wojenny" ("Wartime Weekly"), "Wola", "Wiadomości" ("News"), "KOS" and others. Very popular publications included "Tygodnik Mazowsze" ("Mazowsze Weekly"), "Obserwator Wielkopolski" ("Wielkopolska Observer"), Cracow "Hutnik". New publishing houses were being established,

komitet

e.g. CDN which had close ties to the Paris Culture and its writer roster included: Jan Józef Lipski, Gustaw Herling-Grudziński, Stefan Kisielewski and others. In 1982, Krakowskie Towarzystwo Wydawnicze (Cracow Publishing Society) was established. Their output included the works of Aleksander Hertz, Marian Kukiel. The publishing house "Rytm" ("Rhythm") was launched the following year and went on to found the history library "Ocalić od zapomnienia" ("Save from obscurity") (which collected accounts, memories and documents on the most recent history of Poland, particularly the Polish-Soviet relations). In 1986, Solidarność Walcząca (Fighting Solidarity) - Trójmiasto unit set up the "Petit" book publishing house whose conspiratorial publications included books by such authors as: Kurt Vonnegut, Bohumil Hrabal, Vladimir Bukovsky, Viktor Suvorov and others.

Once the martial law was lifted the number of published zawigz journals remained constant. The first increase did not come in yeh before the end of the 1980s when the young post-Solidarity resjon generation became active. Many regional titles began to appell ar, but they were writing on important country-wide issues, munistry e.g. "Spojrzenia Przemyskie" ("Przemyśl Views"), "Samorzadny Przemyśl" ("Self-governed Przemyśl") and "Strych Kulturalny" zysieg ("Cultural Attic") published in the same city and read eagerly not only in the Podkarpacie region. Another surge in press titles was observed during the Round Table talks and before the parliamentary elections in 1989.



ludzie są wsz

What were the main topics covered by the underground publish TOSC CZ ing houses? Papers on various topics: politics, history, literature, social and cultural were published between 1976 and exaces. 1989/1990. Politics and history naturally dominated. Accord - Now 1989/1990. ing to estimates of bibliologists, every fourth book issued in promis the underground was related to history. Emigration reprints yeare j constituted a significant part of publications (e.g. Instytut Literacki (Literary Institute) in Maisons-Laffitte, publisher of the "Kultura" ("Culture") monthly and "Zeszyty Historyczne" ("Notebooks of history") quarterly and others; Paris Editions Spotkania (Meetings), London publishing houses Polska Fundacja Kulturalna (Polish Cultural Foundation), Aneks, Kontra, LIDARN Gryf Publications Ltd. and Polonia Book Fund Limited. Those studies often concerned the blind spots of historical events and processes, places of remembrance that were either omitted or given false account in the national historiography (e.g. sumiennie spełniać por 8.I.1989I.

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SOLIDARNOSC WALCZACA W STOCZNI GDANSKIEJ

Na przełomie listopada i grudnia 88 r. powstała gropa Solidarności Walczącej w Sto czni Głańskiej. Celem głównym SW jest niepodległa Rzeczypospolita, wyzwolenie narodu polskiego z niewoli komunistyczne Warność ludów i narodów. Jest to nasz wielki, daleki cel. Wyrośliśmy z wspaniał

darnese"

W redowodzie SW tkwią idee ch i tradycje polskich ruchów wolno prawa dla ubogich. Selidarność Walcząca zawiązał

chylnese w kołach nastawionych zku. Na czele SW stoi represjon człowiek o nieugiętej woli walk stemu socimperializmu komunisty CZŁONKIEM SOLIDARNOSCI WALCZACI aestać każdy kto złoży przysie CZŁONKOSTWO SW jest tajne i ni człenków, egniw i grup SW. Na

Selidarneść Walcząca ma ter naniu, Rzeszowie, Gdańsku, War grupy w mniejszych miejscowoś Zachodniej i Ameryce Północne Jak widać nasi ludzie są w

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zycie, dla zbudo dee naszego Ruchu, nie zdradzie 6vierzone mi w nim zadanie."

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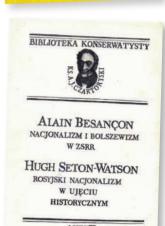
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Katyń massacre, Polish-Bolshevik war of 1920, Home Army's activity, the Warsaw Uprising). The topics discussed included the political legacy of the 2nd Republic. including the history of parliamentary proceedings. Finally, they went on to discuss the most recent history, crimes of the communist regime, the system's economic crisis; they predicted that the regime was coming to an end.

Translations began to appear for western literature, philosophy and science. Particularly popular were authors whose writings touched on the subject of totalitarianism: George Orwell and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Our neighbours also had many publications: Czechs Bohumil Hrabal, Milan Kundera, Vaclav Havel, the Russian Nobel Prize winner Iosif Brodsky, before he became a Nobel laureate, and his compatriots: Vladimir Bukovsky, Vladimir Maksimov, Varlam Shalamov, Venedikt Yerofeyev, and Eugène Ionesco, a Romanian who wrote in French.

Publications also included many translations of other writers, thinkers and scholars whose works touched on the to-

BIBLIOTEKA KONSERWATYSTY ALAIN BESANCON NACJONALIZM I BOLSZEWIZM W ZSRR HUGH SETON-WATSON ROSYJSKI NACJONALIZM w ujęciu HISTORYCZNYM ANTYK

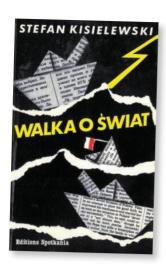


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adimir Bukowski

pics of freedom, democracy, all issues that ran contrary to the Marxist doctrine and denounced the communist reality throughout different countries and periods: Hannah Arendt, Nikolai Berdyaev, Alain Besancon, Zbigniew Brzeziński, Albert Camus, Arnold Toynbee.

Particularly noteworthy here is creative nature of the second circulation. The phenomenon was not only socially (supplementing information and awakening the resistance spirit) and ethically (courage and devotion of participants) valuable, but also unique in terms of communication techniques it employed. Independent production of journals and books was correlated with independent literary, journalistic and scientific works. Works dedicated for second circulation were already being created towards the end of the 1970s. The phenomenon became commonplace in the 1980s. Second circulation featured works by leading Polish writers: Jerzy Andrzejewski,





Stanisław Barańczak, Kazimierz and Marian Brandys, Zbigniew Herbert, Tadeusz Konwicki, Marek Nowakowski, Jarosław Marek Rymkiewicz. Many representatives of the humanities also wrote for illegal publishing houses. Papers by historians were particularly popular which affirmed their value and the needs of recipients. For example: the synthesis of the most recent history of Poland by Wojciech Roszkowski (pseudonym Andrzej Albert), works by Bohdan Cywiński, Krystyna Kersten.

The list of the most often published Polish writers reflects well on the conspiracy publishers' knowledge and readers' preferences. The order corresponds to the number of books published: Czesław Miłosz, Józef Mackiewicz, Witold Gombrowicz, Gustaw Herling-Grudziński, Stanisław Barańczak, Leszek Kołakowski, Sławomir Mrożek. Today, much poorer authors figure on the lists of most popular writers.

When did the second circulation era end in Poland? Determining a breakthrough moment seems problematic. The last day of 1989 was the date when the officially functioning publishing houses required a printing permit from their clients (issued by the censorship office). Only on 11 April 1990 did the Sejm of the Republic of Poland adopt the Act on revoking the Act on the control of publications and performances, abolishing the authorities competent for that control and the amendment of the Act - Press Law. This Act entered into force on 6 June 1990 and the Central Office for the Control of Publications and Performances - main state censorship office of the PRL with its seat at Mysia Street in Warsaw - ceased to exist. 31 August 1990



wolność słowa

was the deadline determined in the regulation of the Minister of Finance by which underground publishing houses had to be either closed down or registered. Most of the publishers took advantage of the latter solution and entered the free market. For example, Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza NOWA (Independent Publishing House NOWA), which was founded in 1977 and published over 300 books and many journals ("Zapis" ("Record"), "Krytyka" ("Critique"), "Puls" ("Pulse"), "Tygodnik Mazowsze" ("Mazowsze Weekly")), and rebranded into "superNowa" in 1989.



In the 3rd Republic independent prints from the PRL period gained value as collector's items. They are collected by libraries and archives, including such institutions as: the National Library, Jagiellonian Library, Ossolineum Library of the National Establishment in Wrocław, Sejm Library or Karta Centre (Ośrodek Karta). They create digital repositories and virtual reading rooms, publish bibliographies and reprints.

Underground prints and machines used for their production became vessels of historical legacy, testimonies to social resistance, as well as objects of analysis by professional historians and political scientists, archivists and museologists. This task is not easy. Just identifying those responsible for publishing a given journal is often a challenge for researchers as, for obvious reasons, only some of the publishing houses published works using the real names of their authors. Those responsible for the printing, distribution or editing usually did not disclose their personal details. Similarly, it is difficult to determine the exact volume, to assess the reach of the prints and, as a result, their social influence.

Second circulation became a polysemantic term in the literature on the subject. Currently, the publishing activity conducted without a license from the authorities is described in many, often imprecise ways: independent, underground, non-permit, uncensored publications, published outside official circulation and censorship. The term bibula (tissue paper) is also used - it was popularised by Józef Pilsudski but originated in the 19th century (tissue paper is very thin paper which under Russian annexation was used for printing publications without permission from the tsar censorship).

dziedzictwo



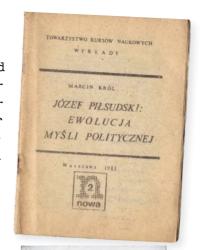
On the other hand, samizdat (Russian "self-standing publishing house" or "I publish myself" - sam izdayu) came to the Soviet Union in the second half of the 1950s, during the "thaw". A decade later samizdat became an everyday term used to describe publications issued outside censorship. Not having access to duplicators and copying machines limited the techniques of illegal production to typescripts, photographs and cassette player recordings. Tamizdat was a name for anti-system publications published in the West and smuggled into the Eastern Block countries.

Formally, the second circulation includes books, journals, as well as leaflets, badges, tags, postcards, stickers, posters. The abundance of those materials makes it difficult to unambiguously classify and synthetically present the publishing heritage of the anti-communist resistance. One attempt to do so was the exhibition "1989 - Rok Wolności Ludów - Zwycięstwo Wolnego Słowa" ("1989 - Nations' Freedom Year - Victory of Free Speech") held in June 2019 in the building of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland.



The aim of the exhibition organised by the Seim Library and the Karta Centre is to present the phenomenon of underground publishing houses and their significance for the fight against totalitarianism. The exhibition served to remind about selected underground press titles, profiles of its creators, anti-communist resistance activists, dissidents, and present a vivid overview of the publishing movement, adopting a wide, international comparative perspective. It also explains the evolution of printing techniques from machine flash paper, the so-called frames, spirit and albumen duplicators to offsets and photocopying machines.

The objects which constitute the narrative axis of the exhibition were provided by the Karta Centre, Sejm Library and private collectors: Marek Kuchciński, Marshal of the Sejm, Bogdan Borusewicz, deputy-Marshal of the Senate,





Małgorzata Zwiercan, deputy - who are members of the Parliament today, but were anti-communist resistance activists in the PRL period.

The exhibits showcase the publishing activity of resistance organisations from various regions of Poland, as well as from Central and Eastern European countries (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia). The collection features unique samizdats and tamizdats. It shows the beginnings of the Polish independent publishing movement in the 1970s and its evolution in the following decades. It presents the tissue paper of the carnival - non-permit prints from the legal "Solidarity" period, as well as underground publications from the martial law period and the end of the 1980s. The selection is a mosaic of texts which are incredibly valuable to showing the characteristics of the democratic opposition's consolidation process. It also helps to understand the reasons for the collapse of communism, the process of the Autumn of Nations and the sources of the systemic transformation in Central and Eastern Europe.

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