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POLISH RADIO ON THE BACKGROUND OF SYSTEMIC CHANGES IN POLAND IN THE YEARS 1945-1956

POLSKIE RADIO NA TLE PRZEMIAN SYSTEMOWYCH W POLSCE W LATACH 1945-1956

Abstract

The Polish Radio began its activity on the first of February 1925. On this day the first program of the Polish Radio technical Society was broadcasted. From then on, the radio accompanied Polish people in good and bad times. The years 1946 – 1956 were not so glorious. At that time, Polish radio became the propaganda tool for the PPR and from December 1949 the PZPR. These parties, mainly under the slogans of the reconstruction of the country from war damage and the struggle for peace, sought to Stalinize Poland on the model of the USSR.

While studying those times, it should be stated that information and publication hardly existed because it was replaced by a hypocritical, brutal and intrusive propaganda. However, history of Polish Radio in those years should not only be described in critical way. At that time, many very important and socially necessary initiatives took place. Since the first year after regaining independence, more and more new broadcast stations have been launched in various regions of Poland. New programs were broadcasting more and more often, such as "Muzyka i Aktualności", in which various messages were given with ease, interwoven with modern jazz music.

Keywords: Radio, propaganda, Stalinism, "Music and News"

Streszczenie

Polskie Radio rozpoczęło swoją działalność pierwszego lutego tysiąc dziewięćset dwudziestego piątego roku. W dniu tym z budynku przy ul. Narbuta 29 nadano pierwszą audycję Polskiego Towarzystwa Radiotechnicznego. Od tej pory radio towarzyszyło

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Polakom w dobrych i złych chwilach. Do niezbyt chwalebnych należały lata 1946 – 1956. W tym czasie systematycznie stawano się ono tubą propagandową początkowo PPR a od grudnia 1949 r. PZPR. Partie te głównie pod hasłami odbudowy kraju ze zniszczeń wojennych i walki o pokój dążyły do stalinizacji Polski na wzór ZSRR.

Badając tamte czasy należy stwierdzić, że informacja i publikacja prawie nie istniała bo zastąpiła ją zakłamana, tępa, brutalna i nachalna propaganda. Nie należy jednak tylko krytycznie opisywać dzieje Polskiego Radia w tamtych latach. Wydarzyło się wówczas wiele bardzo ważnych i społecznie potrzebnych inicjatyw. Od pierwszego roku po odzyskaniu niepodległości uruchamiano coraz to nowe nadawcze stacje radiowe w różnych rejonach Polski. Coraz częściej emitowano nowe audycje, taki między innymi jak „Muzyka i Aktualności”, w której z lekkością podawano różne wiadomości, przeplatając je nowoczesną muzyką jazzową.

Słowa kluczowe: radio, propaganda, stalinizm, „Muzyka i Aktualności”

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Statement of the problem in general outlook and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks.

Radio in the recent history of Poland played a very important role. It contributed to the popularization of all political and economic initiatives in various historical periods. Radio had a special role in 1945-55, when it became a propaganda tool, during the changes modeled on the system of the Soviet Union introduced under the cover of bayonets of the Soviet army. To authenticate the transmitted content to the radio

program, signals closely related to the pre-war radio system were included, such as like the bugle call from the church of St. Mary in Cracow, the signal of the Institute of Time Measurement and the ringing of bells at noon, or the National Anthem at the end of the program. To understand the specificity of those years, the history of Poland from 1944 – 1956 should be analyzed.

Analysis of latest research where the solution of the problem was initiated.

A number of publications about the history of Polish radio has been written. *Kronika roku jubileuszowego „80 lat Polskiego Radia”*. T. Sawicki, Warsaw 2005 and Turkowski R., (2015). *Polskie Radio wobec stalinizacji wsi 1948-1956*, Polskie Radio. Historia – Program - Technika, Warsaw, are some of the most valuables. Topic of this article is discussed in them in an interesting and detailed way. Publications: Chomicz Z., (2005). *80 lat Polskiego*

Radia. Kalendarium, Warsaw, Dąbrowska A., (2015). *Radio Raszyn*, Karta 85 z 2015 r., Kazimierski Z., (2011). *Etos pracy w pierwszej dekadzie PRL*, Etos pracy i deontologia zawodowa, red. M. Kasperski i T. Szczurek, Warsaw, Kurz A., (2000). *Rozbieżności, nurty i postacie w PZPR*, Polska pod rządami PZPR, (red. M.F. Rakowski), Warsaw, were big support while creating this article

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Exposition of main material of research with complete substantiation of obtained scientific results. Discussion.

Polish Radio was reborn in occupied Poland, during the Warsaw Uprising, and began its operations on August 8-9, 1944. These were insurgent broadcasting stations: the first launched on August 8, 1944 by the Home Army "Błyskawica" and the second - Polish Radio launched on August 9 1944. Both of them benefited from the same transmitter and were supported mostly by pre-war Polish Radio employees. From mid-August, broadcasts of the uprising radio were rebroadcast by the BBC in London. Both stations broadcast their latest programs on October 4 (Z. Chomicz, Warsaw 2005, p.47).

The first radio station in post-war Poland was "Pszczółka", a 10 W radio station, launched in Lublin. It was placed in a wagon on the railway siding at the "Franke" factory. The program was broadcast from an improvised studio at Szopena Street (Z. Chomicz, Warsaw 2005, p.47). Wilhelm Billig (pre-war communist, head of the Polish Patriot Union Radio) became its head, and Stanisław Nadzin became his deputy. Another important stage in the post-war reconstruction of the Polish Radio was the establishment of Polish Radio the State Enterprise by virtue of the Decree of the PKWN (Polish Committee of National Liberation) on November 22, 1944 (Kronika roku, Warsaw 2005, p. 31). In terms of its program, it was subordinated to the Ministry of Information and Propaganda, and in technical terms to the Ministry of Communications, Post and Telegraph (Kronika roku, Warsaw 2005, p. 31). These events should certainly be considered the beginning of its active participation in brutal party and political propaganda.

The decision from February 1945 to rebuild the mast and radio station in Raszyn was especially important for the Polish Radio. The station was equipped with a transmitter donated by the USSR, previously plundered in 1939 in Baranowicze, Poland (A. Dąbrowska, 2015, p. 80). On August 19 of that year, the radio station in Raszyn was officially launched. In the studio at Ujazdowski Avenue the entire Government of National Unity with President Bolesław Bierut, a diplomatic corps and invited foreign guests were gathered (Z. relacji dyrektora administracyjnego płk J. Karaśkiewicza, Archiwum Polskiego Radio, reference number d33544)..

From the moment when Poland was reborn (basically from the second half of 1944), the radio became fully subordinated to the government and the ruling party that was the PPR, and from December 1948, the PZPR. Radio activity in the first post-war decade can be divided into two periods. The first is the years 1944-1948, the second is the years of Stalinization and Russification (1949-1956).

In the first Polish Radio, though subjected to strict control, it, however, acting relatively independently, propagated the problems of rebuilding the country, setting up a 3-year plan and incorporating the Western and Northern Territories into the Polish bloodstream. In those years, there were few radio sets in private hands. There were basically three reasons for this. First, during the years of the occupation, an order to the deposit all receivers was issued. Not complying this ordinance and secretly listening to various programs was subject to severe penalties including death. Secondly, by June 1945, the Soviet ban on listening and having radio was in force. Its main author

was the Marshal of the Radzický Union, Konstanty Rokosowski. Thirdly, the market was very poor in this type of products, and when they showed up in the trade they were relatively expensive and available only for vouchers. In this way, each receiver became a luxury commodity and

could only be bought by high-level representatives of state and party administration, labor leaders and other "meritorious in building socialism". If war damage occurs, it becomes clear that the number of listeners was small, and pre-war number of listeners was obtained again in 1949.

Table 1. Number of registered subscribers (data as of 1 January each year)

Year	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949
Number of subscribers	88 257	168 692	481 026	666 969	974 240

Source: R. Turkowski, *Polskie Radio wobec stalinizacji wsi 1945-1956*, Polskie Radio. Historia-Program-Technika, Warsaw 2015, p. 160.

In this situation, the construction of a radio network system and a cable radio was a relatively good solution. To this end, in the years 1945-1949, a cable radio was established, which on 1 November 1949 exceeded 20,350 km. It encompassed all cities in Poland and reached distant villages (R.

Turowski, 2015, p. 159.). Apart from propaganda, this was a very popular form of retransmission of many programs, often very valuable ones. Society called these cable radio differently than government, the most popular name was "kołchoźnik".

Table 2. Cable radio in Poland 1945-1949.

Year	1945	1946	1947	1948	1 X 1949
Broadcasting centers	333 basic	263 basic	251 basic	289 basic 132 additional	367 basic 296 additional
Collective devices		1148	2061	3455	3266

Source: R. Turkowski, *Polskie Radio wobec stalinizacji wsi*. p. 159

However, it should be remembered that in those years, as in the 1930s, the news market was dominated by the press. For the first time, Polish Radio was included in the ideological and political propagation of the referendum in 1946. However, it was still a fairly gentle transmission of propaganda information. A particularly important role in propaganda was played by the Sejm elections in January 1947. After falsification of the elections and the so-called "electoral victory", uncompromising combating of the

opposition and a brutal struggle for power under cover of Soviet troops bayonets began. Radio became an open propaganda tool for state and party authorities. Simultaneously with the brutalization of information policy from 1948, the process of systematically eliminating pre-war, experienced journalists and technical workers began. In their place, young people were employed with the "right worldview" but also lack of any journalistic or radio experience. In this way, Polish Radio entered in 1949 in

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the period of universal Stalinization, Russification and communism as a fully mobile and faithful tool of party and government propaganda. The absurdity and hypocrisy of communist journalism, for example, illustrate the thanksgiving for the Soviet people "for the gift" which was the radio station, delivered by Bolesław Bierut on behalf of the Polish nation. The piquancy of this case is attributable to the fact that it was stolen by the Red Army in 1939 from the regional center of the Polish Radio in Baranowicze (Zbiorowo, Radiobook, 2015, p.29).

From 1949 on Radio, iron discipline regarding information and journalism began to apply. There were, although few, high-level programs. Examples of such broadcasts were given at a symposium organized at the Faculty of Journalism and Science about the Policy of the University of Warsaw on February 3, 2015. The first is Zbigniew Lipinski's journalist series "We are going to the West." The second is Henryk Lukirec's "Voice of life". The third one is Czesława Wojeńska's series entitled "From the history of German barbarity in Poland". Increasingly, however, the principle has been introduced with absolute firmness that materials glorifying the socialist system, the successes of the PZPR, the CPSU and the "gains" of the Soviet nations should be broadcast. In this situation, on the air of Polish Radio, there was no room for normal information and journalism. There was no information about strikes, various kinds of repression, civil war and brutal crackdown on the opposition. The size of radio programs at the turn of the 1950s and 1950s was criticized not only by many listeners but also by many communist activists..

Creation of the Central Office of Radio Broadcasting, subject to the Council of Ministers, which was subordinated to the

State Enterprise of Polish Radio on February 4, 1949 was also very important (Kronika roku jubileuszowego, p.33). Polish Radio during the years 1949-1955 was characterized not only by the not very high level of broadcast programs and information blocks, but also by the reconstruction of structures similar to Stalinist ones that were in force for radio stations of the Soviet Union.

The journalism of years of total Stalinism in the history of Radio cannot be considered glorious. It was dominated by dogmatic and hateful programs typical to socialist realism. Stefan Litaur, who systematically popularized the Soviet point of view of international politics, pretended to be their leaders. On the air of reigned that time: Wanda Odolska - before 1939, editor of *Rozgłoszenia Wileńska* and announcer of Polish Radio in Baranowicze, after the war editor of *Trybuna Ludu i RP*. Her "competition" in a work of a similar journalistic character was the pre-war actor and lecturer Stefan Maratka, called by Marek Hłasko a "tertiary actor" who with particular anger and hatred in a specific way interpreted all information and journalism (From A. Siezieniewski's materials - in his possession the author).

The dark symbol of those years was the FALA 49 program, typical of Stalinist times. It was created and led by Stefan Martyk and already mentioned Wanda Ocholska. After the announcement interspersed with music programs, various political nonsenses were broadcasted. This program was the one most hated by society. Martyka paid for the show with her life. The anti-communist underground (Underground Independence Organization "Kraj") in 1951 issued and executed death sentence on him (Zbiorowo, Radiobook., p.29).

The competitor of FALA 49 was "Muzyka i Aktualności", broadcasted from Septem-

ber 18, 1950. The originators of the program were Henryk Mirosz and Andrzej Rokita. They managed to create a sound formula already known elsewhere, consisting of current columns interspersed with music. It was then the only program in Poland where jazz music that was forbidden at that time could be broadcasted. Undoubtedly, the music was its great asset. Music was one of the ways to attract listeners. The second was the lightness and grace of the content served. Indoctrination was replaced in it with relaxation, as opposed to FALA 49, giving only blunt propaganda slogans. The character of this program attracted more and more better journalists to eventually become a harbinger of the "October thaw" (Z. Chomicz, 2005, p. 59). This program, although significant in the changed formula, survived until the nineties of the last century. Radio activity of Odolska and Martyka was one of the darkest and barbaric wave cards to promote and glorify criminal Stalinism.

The years 1945-1956 and especially 1949-1956 in the history of the Polish Radio, do not belong to the praiseworthy. While studying those times, it should be stated that information and journalism hardly existed because it was replaced by a hypocritical, brutal and intrusive propaganda. However, history of Polish Radio in those years should not only be described in critical way. Many very important and socially needed initiatives took place then. Since the first year after regaining independence, more and more new broadcast stations have been launched in various regions of Poland. And so, on February 10, 1945 in Krakow, the first regional radio station after the war began. March 2, 1945 in Poznan, from a primitive studio, initially broadcast via street channels, started to broadcast from street speakers. Officially, as a radio station, it was opened on June 3, 1945. In Katowice,

on March 5, 1945, a 1kW station started broadcasting. On March 16, a legendary "Pszczółka" was brought to Warsaw from Lublin and placed on the inactive siding of the devastated ZOO. Offices and studios were located on Targowa street. It started broadcasting local programs (Z. Chomicz, 2005, p. 59).

On May 1, 1945 radio station in Bydgoszcz began broadcasting, and on June 10, 1945 station in Gdansk. On August 18, 1945, in the presence of the highest state authorities and the diplomatic corps, the Warsaw radio station and the radio station in Raszyn were opened. "Pszczółka" ended its life and fell silent on August 18, 1945. In its place on December 7, 1945, the Warszawa II station was opened in the Mokotów Fort and it was named after Stefan Starzyński. On September 29, 1945, the Łódź Radio Station, which was rebuilt, was opened (the Germans blew it on January 19, 1945). On December 24, 1945, the Rozgłośnia Polskiego Radia in Szczecin started its activity. However, the press was still dominant on the market of media and journalism.

In that enthusiastic 1945, Polish Radio also began broadcasting various cultural programs. It became possible because various institutions such as orchestras, theaters, cabarets and many others reactivated. As the first on March 25, 1945, the Katowice broadcasting station broadcast the first concert of the reborn Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

On 1 May for the first time on the radio the Salon Orchestra of the Poznań Broadcasting Center appeared. The year 1946 was another step to development of the cultural and organizational activity of the Polish Radio. It was inaugurated by the Polish National Recital Competition for the poetry of Adam Mickiewicz. One of the winners was Stefan Martyka, who received the audience award. From Poznań on the first of March,

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the morning gymnastics, very popular in later years, began. The show was conducted by Karol Hofman (Zbiowo, Radiobook, p.27). In Warsaw, on April 1, the Polish Radio's Polish Radio Orchestra was conducted by Jan Cajmer. The start the activity of the Radio University on the first of September was very important. Radio educational activity has begun. During the academic year, a series of lectures on natural sciences, history, literature and sociology were carried out. Examinations and distribution of the literature and other auxiliary materials were also conducted (Z. Chomicz, p. 53). In September 1946, a new Studio of Polish Radio was opened in Wrocław (70 lat Polskiego Radia 1925-1995, 1995, p.172)

The year 1947 began with the submission of a report on January 16 by the President of the Polish Radio Wilhelm Billy along with a delegation of employees for the President of the Republic of Poland Bolesław Bierut about the results of the work of the Polish Radio. On May 15, Bohdan Tomaszewski made his debut on the radio, which carried out a report on the tennis match for the Davis Cup Poland-England. On September 23 was broadcast a concert of the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra, which after the successes returned from abroad. On 1 November, the Orchestra and Polish Radio Choir was founded in Krakow. The Radio Slavic Music Festival was one of the most important events of those years. The concert was attended by bands from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland and the USSR (Z. Chomicz, p. 54-55). The concerts were broadcast in Poland and abroad. The year 1948 had four characteristic events. The first is full service on August 25-28, 1948 of the Congress of Intellectuals in Wrocław. At the conference room, there were 14 microphones installed, and in the congress study, 6 record-

ers, modern reproducing apparatus and reporting microphones. It was one of the largest organizational undertakings (Kronika roku jubileuszowego , p.33). The second was when, using the experience of the Radio People's University, an educational campaign was launched, carried out as part of the Radio Auditorium. It was a series of lectures, exams and issuing certificates. The third of the most important events was the start of a series of regular concerts of the mixed choir. The end of the year is the Congress of the Unification of Workers' Parties (Kronika roku jubileuszowego, p.57). At that time, the radio sought to provide the fullest possible message from the preparatory work for the congress, its deliberations and news about allegedly "glorious" moods of the society (Z. Chomicz, p. 56-57).

From 1949, when the external and party opposition (with representatives of the so-called nationalist right-wing) was dealt with, and after the arrest of church hierarchy, the communist authorities proceeded to build a socialist system based on Soviet models. Despite the fact that brutal indoctrination played a dominant role in radio programs, the radio continued to develop and introduced new cultural items to its programs. On February 22, 1949, on the 100th anniversary of F. Chopin's death, the Chopin Year was inaugurated at the Roma Theater in Warsaw. The radio transmitted this ceremony and at the same time started a year-round series of programs devoted to the composer. In May of the same year, at the initiative of the Polish Radio in Warsaw, the Folk Music Festival was organized. From September 15 to October 15, Polish Radio broadcasted concerts at the Warsaw Chopin Festival. In the same year, a new program layout was established - parallel broadcasting of Program 1 and Pro-

gram 2 began. In June 1950, on the occasion of the first post-war fifth anniversary, a concert of the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra was held in Warsaw. On September 18 of that year, the "Muzyka i Aktualności" broadcast was broadcast for the first time. It was the formula of a sound magazine consisting of articles intertwined with mainly jazz music (it was the only program in which this type of music was allowed). In March 1951, the State Song and Dance Ensemble "Mazowsze" performed for the first time. Its founder and head was Tadeusz Sygietyński. On September 1, 1953, the "Błękitna sztafeta". was broadcast for the first time. It was intended for the youth and that is why it was broadcast by school radio broadcasting. In March 1954, the radio program "Wesoły kramik" appeared, which consisted of anecdotes about well-known figures. Kazimierz Rudzki was one of the leaders. On the 25th of December of the same year, the "Szpak" cabaret was inaugurated on the radio station. It was created on the initiative of Polish Radio and "Orbis", and broadcasts were broadcast from the cafe of the "Bristol" hotel. His manager was Zenon Wiktorczyk, and performed in it, among others: Hanna Skarżanka, Irena Kwiatkowska, Andrzej Szczepkowski, Wieńczy-sław Gliński, Mieczysław Czechowicz. On January 15, 1955 "Zgaduj zgadula" was broadcast for the first time in the "Przy sobocie po robocie" cycle. Its creators were Waław Przybylski and Andrzej Rokita. On January 21, Polish Radio broadcast a concert on the occasion of the 5th Piano Concerto Fryderyk Chopin and the inauguration of the Philharmonic. A very responsible and difficult task for the radio

was to serve the World Youth and Student Festival, which took place in Warsaw from July 31 to August 14. At that time, a special Festival Broadcaster was installed, which was equipped with a dozen or so studios. Many transmission points have also been organized. On November 15, on the waves of Polish Radio, the first program "Z kraju i ze świata" was broadcast. It was a 30-minute verbal music program devoted to current information from the country and the world (Z. Chomicz, Warsaw 2005, p. 57-63; 70 lat Polskiego Radia 1925-1995, p. 172; 80 years of Polish, p. 58-63). Presenting the above-mentioned achievements, attention should be paid to the systematic expansion of broadcasting stations. On July 24, 1949, the radio station in Raszyn received a 200 kW transmitter and the tallest mast in Europe of 335 m (Dąbrowska A., 2015). The 50-kilowatt transmitter so far has become a reserve. By handing over the new mast and transmitter, the station on ul. Myśliwiecka in Warsaw was also became in use. It was equipped with 12 studios. It allowed listening to Polish Radio programs across Europe, it also allowed for full radio coverage of the entire country. This allowed, from October 3, to simultaneously broadcast two nationwide programs (Z. Chomicz, p. 57). The number of field stations has also systematically increased, and so; in November 1951, the branch of the Polish Radio was opened in Rzeszów, in June 1952 in Opole, in September 1952 in Lublin, in October 1952 in Białystok, in Olsztyn, and in Kielce in November 1953, the branch in Koszalin (70 lat Polskiego Radia 1925-1995, p. 172).

Conclusions.

In conclusion, it should be stated that in the first period after the end of the war, the Polish Radio reached listeners from radio transmitters to street loudspeakers and to the so-called "kołchoźniki". The pre-war number of subscribers was not reached again before 1949. Practically, however, from 1947, when the dark night of Stalinism and the Sovietization of Polish Radio became the propaganda tool of the initial PPR and then the PZPR. However, despite many difficulties, Radio systematically developed and expanded its program. In spite of ubiquitous censorship, more and more new programs appeared, such as the "Muzyka i Aktualności" broadcast offered

in September 1952. Its undoubted merit was illustrating the program with jazz music and transmitting indoctrinated materials with grace and lightness. Polish Radio was systematically expanded. The central radio station has been modernized and the country has covered the network of field offices. Undoubtedly, however, the Polish Radio, especially in the years 1947-1953, was incapacitated and used by the communist authorities for political purposes, and although from 1953 as a result of Stalin's death and the beginning of the struggle for power in the Kremlin, the political pressure slightly eased, however, it remained and continued until 1989.

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