

Ewa Martinek

Adam Mickiewicz University

Poznań's June 1956 in the View of *Wyboje* – the Periodical of Students and Young Intelligentsia of Greater Poland

Abstract: Artykuł stanowi nowy punkt widzenia na czasopismo „Wyboje” z lat 50. XX w., które było skierowane do studentów i młodej inteligencji. Autorkę interesuje obraz wydarzeń Poznańskiego Czerwca 1956 r., przedstawiony na łamach tego pisma. Nie można w nim było o tym pisać wprost ze względu na cenzurę. Ale redaktorzy i publicyści umieli sobie z nią poradzić.

Słowa kluczowe: studenci, Poznań, Poznański Czerwiec, Odwilż, prasa studencka

Shortly after Joseph Stalin's death in March 1953, the authorities tried to maintain the cult of the individual – named streets after him and were raising monuments devoted to him. However, this could not help in maintaining the *status quo*. Conflicts and tensions began to appear among the elites as they began to compete and argue if to continue the political heritage of Stalin. The difficult situation on the political arena of the countries of the Soviet block, resulting from the death of the dictator, crystallized itself significantly after the 20th Convention of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, when Nikita Khrushchev presented his famous speech about the mistakes and distortions of the cult of the individual. Changes which were taking place in the Soviet Union could not pass without an effect on the satellite states, including Polish People's Republic. In addition, the news broadcasted by the Radio Free Europe, especially those based on the account of Joseph Światło, a high official of the Ministry of the Public Security, were contributing to the weakening of the position of the authorities (Paczkowski 2000: 294). The authorities were concerned that the West got officially informed about the situation in Poland (Świda-Ziemia 2010: 233). The Ministry of the Public Security was dismissed and replaced by the Ministry of the Interior (Czubiński 2012: 258). More and more often, and louder and louder, people were talking about the need of destalinisation – the group representing such opinions was called “Puławianie”. Their political opponents were called the “Natolińska” fraction. Also, the death of the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party Bolesław Bierut was no without significance, and was followed, in March 1956, by the appointment of Edward Ochab for the position of the first secretary.

The aforementioned events, beginning with the death of Joseph Stalin, reached the apogee in 1956, and the neuralgic event was the Poznań's June (Jankowiak 2007; Makowski 2006). The general strike and demonstration on the streets were ended by the intervention of the army. Many were killed and injured. The Poznań's events resonated not only in the country but also in the West, as the famous International Fair was taking place at the same time in the city. The authorities could not belittle the problem of such scale and such serious repercussions.

The end of Stalinism was clearly felt in the broadly defined cultural-social sphere. It was once again possible to stage in the theaters works of Adam Mickiewicz, Stanisław Wyspiański and Juliusz Słowacki. Artists were abandoning socialism in favor of Western trends. Man together with his mundane problems and accompanying emotions appeared in the sphere of interest of the arts. People were dancing previously forbidden Latin American dances, were listening to another kinds of music, for example Jazz, hated by Stalin and extremely popular among the youth (Kosiński 2006: 344). It was even possible to buy, in some bookstores, Polish translations of English language books, and those written in Polish, for example *First Step in the Clouds* of Marek Hłasko, were more and more often surprising with their content (Świda-Ziemia 2010: 237). Also, reportage was undergoing a renaissance as it concerned once again problems such as: alcoholism, prostitution, etc., which were silenced during Stalinism (Fik 1994: 261). These topics were also present in student periodicals, among others in *Po Prostu* and Poznań's *Wyboje*. The latter often informed about the problem of prostitutes standing nearby Wolności square. A true milestone in the fight for a new quality of writing was *Poemat dla dorosłych* of Adam Ważyk which appeared on the pages of *Nowa Kultura*, and which almost openly criticized propagandist slogans and assumptions of Stalinism.

Discrediting of the cult of individual had a strong influence on a part of young people, especially those who, during Stalinism, were undergoing the strongest indoctrination. Communist authorities did not underestimate the role of school in the process of creation of a new citizen. The purges among the teachers, new textbooks written according to the political discourse, system of education changed according to the model valid in the USSR, were shaping "the generation of belonging to the Polish Youth Association followers of the ideology" (Świda-Ziemia 2010: 85-130). In 1949-1955 the number of members of the association increased to 2 millions (Kochanowicz 2000 : 62). These were the people fascinated by the slogans of communist ideology, who owed their privileged position in the social hierarchy to the new political system. Because of this, their pique, resulting from the disappointment with Stalinism, was adequate to their belief in it. They were the people who created "the generation of belonging to the Polish Youth Association revisionists" (Świda-Ziemia 2010: 223-302), who energetically joined the fight with a pen for a new image of Polish People's Republic.

In 1956, students' periodicals, which were commenting on the distortions of Stalinism, were very popular, including the leading Warsaw's *Po prostu*. This students' weekly was created already in 1947 as a press organ of the Polish Youth Association (Waśkiewicz 1975: 199). In the face of the changes that came with the end of Stalinism, the journal completely changed its profile and started to boldly comment on the mistakes and distortions of the authorities, especially of the cult of the individual. Other major academic centers were also publishing students' periodicals, including the most known: Poznań's *Wyboje*, Kraków's *Zebra*, Gdańsk's *Kontrasty* and Wrocław's *Poglądy* (Waśkiewicz 1975:199).

The editorial office of *Wyboje* was the one which was closest to the June strike, therefore the texts devoted to the Poznań's June, published in this journal will be the subject of this article. *Wyboje* were being published between 3 October 1956 and 28 November 1957. The core of the editorial team was composed of students and representatives of so called young intelligentsia: Włodzimierz Braniecki, Bohdan Czarnocki, Stanisław Dziadoń, Zdzisław Romanowski and Jerzy Sikorski. The editor in chief was Michał Misiorny. The first issue appeared in 10 000¹ copies, and the last issue, published in 1956, in 25 350² copies, so the number increased twice. The periodical was the organ of the Polish Youth Association in

¹ „Wyboje” 1 (1956), p. 1 (in Polish).

² „Wyboje” 12 (1956), p. 1 (in Polish).

Poznań, and its editorial office was located on Kościuszki street. The main topics of the journal were related to the students' community of Poznań, but politics were also being mentioned. A lot of attention was given to the question of finding a place in the new reality which came with the end of Stalinism and the cult of individual. Other articles concerned social problems of Greater Poland's inhabitants, culture and arts. *Wyboje* was also a place where poems of local poets, as well as of those recognized in the entire country, were published. There was also a column *Wyboje bis*, where pupils of high schools could try their skills as journalists. Among guests' articles we find those of Antoni Czubiński, a later Professor of the University of Adam Mickiewicz.

On the pages of *Wyboje* we can find an account of Stanisław Matyja³, a worker of the Metalworks of Joseph Stalin in Poznań, the leader of the mentioned strike, who told about the causes of the widening gulf between the workers and the management of ZISPO. The problems started already in 1953. The workers were more and more dissatisfied with the decisions of the management which prioritized realization of bureaucratic directives over the interest of the workers. The following year, the workers were only fed with socialist slogan which did not have a reflection in reality. As Matyja noticed, the clichés could not substitute food for the workers, who more and more rarely had enough money to buy it. Also, the workers did not have a support of the Committee of the Factory and of the Council of the Factory. The management was blind to this, as it was focused on performing the orders of supervising authorities, and in particular plants one could meet people spreading an atmosphere of fear. This acts were aimed at silencing the dissatisfied workers. The first voices of official critic appeared at the 3rd plenum of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party, but, as Matyja said, the management adopted a rule called, according to a Polish saying: *the dog is barking, but the caravan is going further*⁴. During the proceedings, the project of the Five-Year Plan was discussed, but the adopted solutions could not have had an influence on the improvement of the workers' situation.

The 20th convention of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union encouraged workers of ZISPO to a more bold fight for their rights in the face of the widening gulf between the socialist slogans and the reality. The problem was exacerbated by the approach of the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party Majchrzycki, who was belittling the fact of unrealistic norms of labor imposed on the workers. A delegate from the Ministry also disappointed the workers of "Ceglorz", as he did not handed in their collected demands and postulates in promised time.

Matyja, in his account written down by Stanisław Dziadoń, brought closer the events, day after day, from 20 June to 27 June, that is to the day preceding Poznań's events. On Wednesday 20 June, the carpenters from "Ceglorz" chose three delegates, including Matyja. They went to the representative of the Council of the Factory, comrade Edmund Taszer, in order to obtain an answer to the question of what had happened to their postulates. They heard some not optimistic words: "Warsaw is silent"⁵, as well as assertions that if the capital did not issue an answer, the director of the factory would talk with the workers the following day. However, this was not the end, the delegates received a reprimand for their "shameful" behavior, they were also being intimidated.

The following day at work started with the anticipation of the arrival of the head director who was scheduled to appear at 9 am, but who did not do it. The disappointment of the workers was deepened by the lack of agreement to conduct the talks with the entire team, but only with selected delegates. The disappointment was even more profound when at

³ S. Dziadoń (1956), *Bez kropłomierza [Without a Dropper]*, „Wyboje” 7, p. 3 (in Polish).

⁴ S. Dziadoń (1956), *Bez kropłomierza [Without a Dropper]*, „Wyboje” 7, p. 3 (in Polish).

⁵ S. Dziadoń (1956), *Bez kropłomierza [Without a Dropper]*, „Wyboje” 7, p. 3 (in Polish).

9:45 am, instead of the head director, the director of W-3 Kocik appeared. He repeated the words expressed the day before by Taszer that there still was no answer from Warsaw. The inefficient attempts to explain the causes of the supply problems of the factory could not calm down the irate crowd. Workers demanding the arrival of the representatives of CRZZ and of the Ministry started to come up to the platform and speak. The director decided that the workers would select a representation of the works which would be responsible for the control of supply department. The same delegation was supposed to conduct talks with the representatives from the capital. The same day, director Kocik proposed that the workers' delegation went to Warsaw, what did not meet with the acceptance of the staff, therefore an ultimatum was made: or the representatives from Warsaw would come before 26 of June, or the people would go to the streets.

On 22 June, an information arrived saying that the workers of plants such as: the Rolling Stock Repair Facilities, Urban Slaughterhouse, City Transportation Company, and the plants being supervised by the head management⁶, were in solidarity with "Ceglorz". Matyja was complaining because he did not think that the workers' class would have to stand up to fight for their rights in the Peoples' Poland. At 1 pm, a committee from Warsaw arrived to Poznań, and at 2 pm, the talks with the staff took place. The only concrete information that the complaining staff heard was an invitation for a delegation of ZISPO to Warsaw in order to conduct negotiations with the representatives of CRZZ and the Minister of the Machine Industry, Roman Fideliski. A day later, on 23 June, W-3 selected a delegation of 7 people⁷. Matyja was one of the chosen. Other plants also selected their representatives.

The new work week began with the debriefing of the delegates, which included an attempt to speak by Jan Majchrzycki. However, he did not manage to finish his speech, as it was interrupted by the irate crowd. The workers were drowning Majchrzycki because they felt intimidated (Makowski 2006 : 45). The next day, 26 June, 28 representatives from Poznań⁸ were already in the capital, where they went to the talks with CRZZ. They were accompanied by the representatives of the management of ZISPO. They expressed the following demands: "the pay rise, the elimination of overtime, the revision of norms, the regulation of the question of tax deduction and of the bonuses for the white collar workers, the improvement of safety"⁹. The author of the text concluded the enumerated postulates with the words: "there are even smaller matters"¹⁰. The postulates not included in the article were: shortening of the time of work for women to 6 hours a day, introduction of free Saturday, taking into consideration the voice of the staff in the questions concerning the factory, restoring the prices of food from times before hidden increase and care for good quality of coal for employees, or compensation in a form of cash equivalent (Makowski 2006: 45). The Minister Fidelski agreed with the postulates, and, at the same time, obliged himself to fulfill the demands. At night, the delegation from Poznań left the capital by train.

The day preceding the June strike did not bring awaited consensus. At 10 am¹¹, the Minister Fidelski arrived to ZISPO, and the delegates received an order to acquaint the rest of

⁶ S. Dziadoń (1956), *Bez kropłomierza* [Without a Dropper], „Wyboje” 7, p.3 (in Polish).

⁷ Another information about the number of the delegates can be found in the work of Edmund Makowski, stating that there were 7, not 5, delegates elected from W-3; E. Makowski (2006), *Poznański Czerwiec 1956. Pierwszy bunt społeczeństwa PRL* [Poznań's June 1956. The First Revolt of the Society of the Polish People's Republic], Poznań, p. 45 (in Polish).

⁸ The book of E. Makowski says about 27 of them; E. Makowski (2006), *Poznański Czerwiec 1956. Pierwszy bunt społeczeństwa PRL* [Poznań's June 1956. The First Revolt of the Society of the Polish People's Republic], Poznań, p. 45 (in Polish).

⁹ S. Dziadoń (1956), *Bez kropłomierza* [Without a Dropper], „Wyboje” 7, p. 3 (in Polish).

¹⁰ S. Dziadoń (1956), *Bez kropłomierza* [Without a Dropper], „Wyboje” 7, p. 3 (in Polish).

¹¹ The book of E. Makowski gives an information, that it was at 11 am; E. Makowski (2006), *Poznański Czer-*

the staff with the arrangements made in Warsaw. The mass meeting was announced to be held at 2pm – and it was exactly this meeting which provoked workers. The Minister, in his speech, denied everything that he had said the day before in Warsaw. He commented the situation in the factory with the words: “It is not that bad. Go and start working”¹². The workers left disillusioned, they knew that they could not wait any longer for the day of fulfillment of the promises from Warsaw, because it would never come. “The system of numbness, bureaucracy and indifference to human affairs yielded. And these were bloody yields”¹³. Matyja was asking: “who will be responsible for this? The system?”¹⁴ – while underlining the fact that system is created by people. Mass meetings were also held in other departments, and had much more peaceful character than in W-3 (2006: 48) (Makowski 2006: 48). The staff of W-3 was so irate because of Fildecki's statement that they did not want to listen even to their own representatives, including respected Matyja (Makowski 2006: 49). The cheated workers felt that the only solution in this situation was to go out to the street.

At the end of the text, below the signature of Dziadoń, we can see an illustration including a fragment of the painting of Francisco Goya depicting *The shooting of the insurgents on 3 May 1808 in Madrid*. It is possible that it constituted an allusion to the behavior of communist authorities towards Poznań's workers. It is also interesting that at the next page we can read an article about art, illustrated with paintings of famous artists, including Francisco Goya. It seems that it constituted a salvo for the editors who could have had problems because of the choice of illustrations for the text about the Poznań's June.

The editors of the journal were not indifferent to the fate of the participants of the June's events, as they initiated a resolution of the students of Poznań. The resolution was a result of the rally of the students of Poznań's higher schools, which took place on 21 October 1956. W. Broniecki was remembering the excitement of passing of the resolution, which took place on 22 October in the Assembly Hall of the University¹⁵. A new provost of the University of Adam Mickiewicz – Alfons Klafkowski (Schramm :14)¹⁶ elected on the wave of the thaw was speaking. Then, W. Broniecki read the content of the resolution in front of the large audience. It was acclaimed with huge hopes expressed by singing the national anthem¹⁷. “Due to the causes uninfluenced by the editors”, *Wyboje* published only a fragment of the famous postulates. They demanded, among others: Polish-Soviet relations based on equality – dismissal of the Minister of Defense, Konstanty Rokossowski; change of the names of streets, institutions and cities bearing surnames of compromised political activists¹⁸. Among the postulates a demand to stop the jamming stations and departure from the counterrevolutionary censorship rights were included. They did not forget about the imprisoned heroes of the June's events, demanding an amnesty for them and verification of the assessment of the Poznań's June. The text of the resolution often expressed its support

wiec 1956. *Pierwszy bunt społeczeństwa PRL [Poznań's June 1956. The First Revolt of the Society of the Polish People's Republic]*, Poznań, p. 48 (in Polish).

¹² S. Dziadoń (1956), *Bez kropłomierza [Without a Dropper]*, „Wyboje” 7, p. 3 (in Polish).

¹³ S. Dziadoń (1956), *Bez kropłomierza [Without a Dropper]*, „Wyboje” 7, p.3 (in Polish).

¹⁴ S. Dziadoń (1956), *Bez kropłomierza [Without a Dropper]*, „Wyboje” 7, p.3 (in Polish).

¹⁵ W. Broniecki (2005), *To są ikony dróg. Wyboje [These are the Icons of the Roads. Wyboje]* in: *Odwilż '56*, „Kronika Miasta Poznania”, Poznań 2005, no. 3, p. 52 (in Polish).

¹⁶ T. Schramm, *Odwilż na Uniwersytecie Poznańskim [The Thaw at the University of Poznań]* in: *Odwilż '56*, „Kronika Miasta Poznania” 3, Poznań, p. 14 (in Polish).

¹⁷ W. Broniecki (2005), *To są ikony dróg. Wyboje [These are the Icons of the Roads. Wyboje]* in: *Odwilż '56*, „Kronika Miasta Poznania”, Poznań, p. 52 (in Polish).

¹⁸ The Participants of the Rally of the Students of the Universities of Poznań (1956), *Rezolucja studentów Poznania [The Resolution of the Students of Poznań]* in: „Wyboje” 4, p. 1 (in Polish).

for the politics of Władysław Gomułka, who was seen as a hope for the citizens of the People's Republic¹⁹. The fact that not all of the postulates were printed, and that it was underlined that the editors were not responsible for this fact, suggests that this decision had been made on their behalf, by the censorship.

The fragment of the resolution presented on the pages of *Wyboje – the Periodical of Students and Young Intelligentsia of Greater Poland* became an impulse to a new initiative. The editors of the periodical received numerous letters from their readers including a proposition of creating a monument which would commemorate the June's events. However, the editors of *Wyboje* proposed that the monument would be devoted to the heroism of the people of Greater Poland and include those defending Poland in 1939, *kościuszkowcy*, and all those who lost their lives due to the distortion of Socialism, with the victims of Poznań's June as the most important ones. The monument would remind the future generations about the testimony of past events²⁰, however, as history showed, the initiative was not realized. Interesting is the fact that in the issue from 8-14 November 1956²¹ there was letter to editors saying that the initiators of building of the monument of the heroes of Poznań's June were the actors of the theater *Alarm*: Bohdan Adamczak, Kazimierz Braun, Ada Macznik and Tatiana Zalewska. However, the actors admitted in their letter that even though their initial idea was a monument devoted to the memory of the workers fighting on 28 June, after a conversation with the editors of *Wyboje* they acceded to the idea proposed on the pages of the periodical.

In the issue from 28 June 1957, so on the anniversary of the Poznań's June, a fragment of Gomułka's speech from the 8th Plenum and from the meeting with the workers of Cegielski²², was published in *Wyboje*. It constitutes a revision of the assessment of the events from the year earlier. The 1st Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party was looking for the causes of the tragedy of June not in the political system of Poland but in the *evil*²³ which distorted Socialism. However, he did not explain what he meant by the euphemistic concept of evil. He, however, recognized that it was the reason of the workers going out to the street, and not, as it was considered earlier, imperialistic agents. He also blamed former management of the Party, which, in his opinion, was not able to react on time to help the working class. Also, he criticized the foundation of the 6 year plan – as impossible to be carried out, as too much caring for numbers instead of people.

Władysław Gomułka also touched the topic of commemorating the victims. The tragedy of Poznań's June he considered a family tragedy meaning the tragedy of the nation. He recommended that delegations visited the graves of the victims, both the workers striking, as well as soldiers of the Polish Army. The proposed form of commemoration of the victims can be, however, literally associated with the family tragedy, not a tragedy of the nation. The 1st Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party thought that it was not good to return to the topic of Poznań's June too often and build monuments to

¹⁹ The Participants of the Rally of the Students of the Universities of Poznań (1956), *Rezolucja studentów Poznania* [The Resolution of the Students of Poznań] in: „Wyboje” 4, p. 1 (in Polish).

²⁰ W. Braniecki, B. Czarnocki, M. Fitzowa, M. Grześczak, J. Kokorniak, J. Kopczyński, M. Kozłowski, M. Misiorna, M. Misiorny, K. Młynarz, Z. Romanowski, J. Sikorski, A. Zielonka (1956), „Wyboje” 5, p.1 (in Polish).

²¹ B. Adamczak, K. Braun, A. Macznik, T. Zalewska (1956), *List do redakcji* [Letter to the Editorial Office] in: „Wyboje” 6, p. 7 (in Polish).

²² W. Gomułka (1957), *Fragment przemówienia na VIII plenum i na spotkaniu z robotnikami Cegielskiego* [A Fragment of the Speech at the 8th Plenum and at the Meeting with the Workers of Cegielski] in: „Wyboje” 26, p. 1 (in Polish).

²³ W. Gomułka (1957), *Fragment przemówienia na VIII plenum i na spotkaniu z robotnikami Cegielskiego* [A Fragment of the Speech at the 8th Plenum and at the Meeting with the Workers of Cegielski] in: „Wyboje” 26, p.1 (in Polish).

the victims, as the testimony of the past events could be used by *black reaction*²⁴. At the same time, Gomułka was assuring that the authorities drew conclusions from the difficult lesson of the Black Thursday: those guilty of the tragedy were punished, and the irregularities and problems in the Party solved. The speech ends with a conclusion that after the tragedy of June, they should not look for heroes, and the mourning should be experienced in silence. The published fragment was somehow an answer to the proposition of the editors of *Wyboje* concerning building the monument of heroism of the people of Greater Poland²⁵. Interesting is a fact that on the same page, next to the speech of W. Gomułka, appeared a poem of Cyprian Kamil Norwid entitled *Mournful Rhapsody In Memoriam of Bem*. The protagonist of the poem is general Józef Bem, among others the commander of artillery during the November Uprising. The first part of the poem speaks about the mournful march escorting the general to his grave. The second part of the poem, however, shows that reaching the resting place is not the end but a beginning – as the memory of the general will not die and he will live in the nation encouraging it to fight. The funeral procession became a march of those fighting for freedom. The message of the poem says that one should not stop defending their ideas, and that the symbol of grave is not the end of fight for freedom but a beginning. The publication of the poem of Cyprian Kamil Norwid next to the speech of the 1st Secretary does not seem to be an accident, as the message of the poem also fits to the idea carried by Poznań's strikes. The memory of the victims should not be hidden in the domestic seclusion, but it should be a lesson and an inspiration for the nation.

There was one more text, published in this issue, undertaking the topic of the tragedy of June²⁶. The article of Z. Romanowski was saying about 55 killed and their crushed families – about the fallen, called by the authorities²⁷ bandits who were accused of collaboration with imperialistic agents. The number of victims given in *Wyboje* was consistent with the finding of the General Prosecutors' Office²⁸. As an argument which was supposed to support that harming opinion it was pointed out that the demonstration of the workers coincided with the Poznań International Fair. They even blamed Western journalists for the blood shed: "the journalists' ink turned into blood"²⁹. There were voices which sharply criticized those who allowed Polish press to reveal the mistakes and crimes of stalinism. On the other hand, it was underlined that not the undertaking of the topic of stalinists distortions incited the workers of Cegorz, but the fact that the employees personally felt the effects of those mistakes. The Black Thursday became for the authorities an argument for radicalization of life. However, the Polish October came together with awaking of new hopes and expectations of the people. In the article, the author also referred to the workers' protests in Bydgoszcz and Szczecin, calling them hooligans' jokes not deserving a comparison with the tragedy of Poznań's June. However, the riots both in Szczecin and in Bydgoszcz had an anti-Soviet character. The attacks of anger and hatred were directed towards public service officers. Street fights took place as well as demolition of headquarters of state

²⁴ W. Gomułka (1957), *Fragment przemówienia na VIII plenum i na spotkaniu z robotnikami Cegielskiego* [A Fragment of the Speech at the 8th Plenum and at the Meeting with the Workers of Cegielski] in: „Wyboje” 26, p. 1 (in Polish).

²⁵ W. Braniecki, B. Czarnocki, M. Fitzowa, M. Grześcak, J. Kokorniak, J. Kopczyński, M. Kozłowski, M. Misiorna, M. Misiorny, K. Młynarz, Z. Romanowski, J. Sikorski, A. Zielonka (1956), „Wyboje” 5, p.1 (in Polish).

²⁶ Z. Romanowski (1957), *Czerwiec* [June] in: „Wyboje”, p.3 (in Polish).

²⁷ PKF [Polish Film Chronicle] 28/56.

²⁸ The number of victims is still a matter of discussion: A. Ziemkowski found that there were 74 fallen in total, the same number was confirmed by the Commission of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in 1980s, E. Makowski (2006), *Poznański Czerwiec 1956. Pierwszy bunt społeczeństwa PRL* [Poznań's June 1956. The First Revolt of the Society of the Polish People's Republic], Poznań, p. 165 (in Polish).

²⁹ Z. Romanowski (1957), *Czerwiec* [June] in: „Wyboje”, p.3 (in Polish).

authorities. The author, Romanowski, noticed that a professional assessment of Poznań's events was still not fully possible. For that reason, he left it to the next generations believing that they would be able to objectively speak about Poznań's June. This does not mean however that the author did not try to assess the past event. Romanowski saw the main reason of the June's tragedy in the authorities dazzled by performing administrative directives. In order to cure the relationships of citizens and the authorities he proposed a junction of the will of the nation with the power apparatus. The author touched, in his text, the question of approach of the authorities towards young participants of the described events, who were blamed for the tragic events as those who incited the staff to the riots. Activists of the Polish Youth Association, for whom the world of a utopia had to be completely destroyed, were among the arrested. The author of the article referred to the words of Gomułka, who compared the Black Thursday to a family tragedy. Romanowski agreed with this opinion underlining the fact that both the workers of Ceglorz, as well as the army used against them, were Poles. He reminded that those shooting to the workers were only fulfilling orders, and that it was possible, that only thanks to that fact a bigger bottling of blood was avoided. The article ends with an assurance that the memory of the fallen would, however, be honored in silence and self-communion. This way, Romanowski agreed with Gomułka not to ponder too much over the events of the Black Thursday. It is difficult to say to what extent the author really agreed with the 1st Secretary, and to what extent the real opinion of the editors was hidden in the interpretation of the poem of Cyprian Kamil Norwid.

Wyboje did not publish any article which would relate the events of 28 June 1956. There could have been many reasons for that. *Wyboje* began to be published on 3 October, what is more than three months after Poznań's strike. It is possible that for that reason the editors decided that not the course of events, but its causes, which were included in the account of S. Matyja, and the assessment of it, even though to a large extent based on the speech of Gomułka from 21 October 1956, were most important. It does not mean, however, that the editors of *Wyboje* did not try to base their assessments on the accounts of witnesses, for which a proof could be the initiative³⁰ proposed in the issue from 21 November 1956. The team of this student periodical asked witnesses of the June's events for sending their accounts, opinions and comments on the Black Thursday. The aim of this action was an honest assessment of Poznań's June. Unfortunately, *Wyboje*, under the influence of the censorship, did not publish any single account. The censorship questioned the account of one of the arrested for the participation in Poznań's June – S. Kaufman (Grzelak 2016). A proof for the influence of censorship on the content published in *Wyboje* can be the fact of rejecting, by the censorship, the image of J. Hoffman depicting a tank and a soldier looking through a binoculars. The background was composed of the captions: *Poznań 28 June 1956, Warsaw 19 October 1956* and *Budapest* (with a date covered by the flap of the tank) (Grzelak 2016: 182). Despite the *thaw* even the most popular student magazine in Poland, *Po prostu*, in the article devoted to the events of the Black Thursday, repeated the opinion of the authorities that imperialistic agents were responsible for Poznań's tragedy (Jankowiak i Regulska: 2002: 50). Similar articles – in accordance with the opinion of the Party – we could find in local Poznań's press, with *Głos Wielkopolski* and *Gazeta Poznańska* in the lead (Jankowiak i Regulska 2002: 48-51).

From 27 September to 5 October 1956 the so called *Poznań processes* (Makowski 2006: 259-273) were being carried, and there was no article devoted to their course in *Wyboje*. However, in the first issue, from 3 October 1956, on the very bottom of the page 4, there is a short text intriguingly entitled *Wyrok*³¹. The author of the text Aleksander Zielonka is de-

³⁰ (1956) *Od redakcji* [From the Editors] in: „Wyboje” 8, p. 11 (in Polish).

³¹ A. Zielonka (1956), *Wyrok* [The Sentence] in: „Wyboje” 1, p. 4 (in Polish).

scribing in it a story of a certain librarian called Wózek, working in the County Library in Kozie Bródki. The librarian was meticulously placing the books on a shelf, getting rid of the books ironically called “lampoons on the people’s reality”, among others: *Commentariorum de Republica emendanda* of Frycz Modrzewski and *The Cause of the Destruction of Poland* of the priest Stanisław Staszic. The bookcase “was wavering not very ideologically”³² and not once collapsed with all its content. When finally the librarian thought that he achieved an impossible and the bookcase stopped, the comrade Masło entered the library and knocked the bookcase with the door provided with a caption saying: “my work testifies about me”, and the bookcase fell down. The comrade Masło was asking mister Wózek several times in a row, where the chairmen was, and the librarian was answering according to the truth: “I do not know”. Two months later, a process against the librarian for “the hooligan attitude towards authorities”³³ took place. It seems that this ironic story, which action takes place in a non-existent town, is an allusion to the Poznań’s processes, where the accused were also wrongfully called hooligans³⁴. It is possible that a Sisyphean work of the librarian consisting in the constant placing books on the tottery bookcase is a reference to the policy of the authorities towards citizens, including the workers of ZISPO.

Wyboje – the Periodical of Students and Young Intelligentsia of Greater Poland constitutes a valuable historical source. It provides interesting information about the ways in which a student periodical saw and described Poznań’s strike. An interesting phenomenon noticed based on numerous observations and analyses is the way of expressing opinions by the editors via poems, illustrations, or, like in the case of the story of the librarian, irony – the elements which could not have been openly written or commented on. It shows that the interference of the censorship was significant even in a *thaw’s* magazine, and that the authors had to be careful about what and how they were writing. The reading of a real opinion of the authors requires from the readers not only focus but also an analyses and interpretation. Based on this, we can conclude that the young editors cared for a professional and honest assessment of the Poznań’s strike.

Bibliography

- Czubiński Antoni (2012), *Historia Polski XX wieku [History of Poland of the 20th Century]*, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Nauka i Innowacje (in Polish).
- Fik Marta (1994), *Kultura Polska 1944-1956 [Polish Culture 1944-1956]* in: *Polacy wobec przemocy 1944-1956*, Warszawa: Edition Spotkania (in Polish).
- Grzelczak Piotr (2016), *Poznański Czerwiec 1956 Walka o pamięć w latach 1956-1989 [Poznań’s June 1956. Battle about memory]*, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Nauka i Innowacje, Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (in Polish).
- Jankowiak Stanisław and Rogulska Agnieszka (eds) (2002), *Poznański Czerwiec 1956*, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (in Polish).
- Jankowiak Stanisław (2007), *Sytuacja społeczno-polityczna w Wielkopolsce w pierwszej połowie lat pięćdziesiątych na tle sytuacji w kraju [Social-political Situation in Greater Poland in the First Half of the 1950s at the background of the Situation in the Country]* in: Konrad Białecki and Stanisław Jankowiak (eds.) *Poznański Czerwiec 1956: Uwarunkowania – Przebieg – Konsekwencje. Materiały z międzynarodowej konferencji naukowej Poznań 22-23 czerwca 2006*, Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM (in Polish).
- Kochanowicz Joanna (2000), *ZMP w terenie, stalinowska próba modernizacji opornej rzeczywistości [Polish Youth Association in the Terrain, Stalinist Attempt to Modernization of the Refractory Reality]*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Trio (in Polish).

³² A. Zielonka (1956), *Wyrok [The Sentence]* in: „Wyboje” 1, p. 4 (in Polish).

³³ A. Zielonka (1956), *Wyrok [The Sentence]* in: „Wyboje” 1, p. 4 (in Polish).

³⁴ PKF [Polish Film Chronicle] 28/56.

- Kosiński Krzysztof (2006), *Oficjalne i prywatne życie młodzieży w czasach PRL* [Official and Private Life of the Youth in the Times of the Polish People's Republic], Warszawa: Rosner & Wspólnicy (in Polish).
- Makowski Edmund (2006), *Poznański Czerwiec 1956. Pierwszy bunt społeczeństwa PRL* [Poznań's June 1956. The First Revolt of the Society of the Polish People's Republic], Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie (in Polish).
- Paczkowski Andrzej (2000), *Pół wieku dziejów Polski 1939-1989* [Half a Century of the History of Poland: 1939-1989], Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN (in Polish).
- Schramm Tomasz (2005), *Odwilż na Uniwersytecie Poznańskim* [The Thaw at the University of Poznań] in: *Odwilż '56, „Kronika Miasta Poznania”* 3, Poznań, p. 14 (in Polish).
- Świda-Ziemia Hanna (2010), *Młodzież PRL. Portrety pokoleń w kontekście historii* [The Youth of the Polish People's Republic. The Portraits of Generations in the Context of History], Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie (in Polish).
- Waśkiewicz Andrzej Krzysztof (ed.) (1975), *Czasopisma Studenckie w Polsce (1945-1970)*, Warszawa: Zarząd Główny Socjalistycznego Związku Studentów Polskich (in Polish).

Biographical note: Ewa Martinek, MA – PhD student at the University of Adam Mickiewicz in Poznań. The main research interests are focused on the student community during the thaw, as well as on broad cultural and social topics related to the period of the PRL.
