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Opposition Attitudes of the Youth
in the Polish People's Republic

Abstract: *The main aim of this article is to discuss the opposition attitudes of the young people in the Polish People's Republic (PRL). It is not a regular narrative. It is rather a review of selected phenomena, presented in several interlinked essays. The youth subcultures, underground organizations, some opposition attitudes (resistance, dissent and political opposition) and young people's answer to the proposition of the Catholic Church were analysed in that work. Those attitudes were determined by the political, social and economic circumstances in the years 1945-1989, especially the lack of freedom of legal action outside of rulers' control, the degree of integration within the regime and the relations of domination and subordination, as well as the associated with them level of frustration.*

Key words: The Poland People's Republic, Catholic Church, Youth, Opposition Attitudes, Youth Subcultures, Youth Underground Organizations

Introduction

The attitudes of the youth, as well as the whole society, towards the communist regime in the Polish People's Republic (PRL)[1] could be classified into three basic groups: pro-system (affirmation and voluntary involvement in building of a system), a-system (between indifference and taking advantage of social and political changes – adaptation) and anti-system (resistance, dissent and opposition). The main aim of that article is to discuss the last category of attitudes. It is not a regular narrative. It is rather a review of selected phenomena, presented in several interlinked essays. The youth subcultures, underground organizations, some opposition attitudes (from social resistance, trough dissent to political opposition) and young people's answer to the proposition of the Catholic Church were analysed in that work. Those attitudes were determined by the political, social and economic circumstances in the years 1945

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[1] The term the "Polish People's Republic" (PRL) become in use just in July 1952 (after the enactment of the PRL's Constitution), and was valid until December 1989. Before 1952, the name "the Republic of Poland" was also used. For the sake of simplicity, the term the "PRL" was applied in this article for the whole period 1944-1989.

–1989, especially the lack of freedom of legal action outside of rulers' control, the degree of integration within the regime, and the relations of domination and subordination, as well as the associated with them level of frustration.

Context

The young people have a natural tendency to question the reality they live in. At first, the communists planned to use that tendency, at the same time controlling it. During the so-called revolutionary stage, which did not last too long, the remnants of the old regime were to be eliminated. As the system got consolidated (ca. 1951), the authorities no longer needed revolutionaries, but builders and workers who "want to work in an ordinary and reliable manner as disciplined citizens who participate in the social redistribution of roles and tasks of the whole society".[2] That is why opposition and defiant attitudes could no longer be part of the new political system of the PRL, which excluded any form of resistance. The authorities aimed at cleansing the official sphere of any signs of political heterogeneity, at removing – at least officially – all internal divisions (including the elimination of grass-roots social activity). The new regime was to integrate all inhabitants of Poland into one "socialist nation" – understood, among other things, as "the working class led by the Party".[3] Therefore, the ruling Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza – PZPR) aimed to control all the areas of citizens' life guiding their behaviour with subordinated institutions so-called "transmission belts" (e.g. schools, mass media or youth organizations).[4]

The youth, after a proper training and education, were to become "builders of socialism" as well, and – according to one of the slogans – "always stand by the Party." That age group was considered by the communists an important ally in building a new society.[5] Simultaneously they considered the youth to be the most susceptible to ideology and official propaganda. That is why the authorities attempted to exercise absolute control over youth communities and eliminate all independent structures. Young peo-

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[2] Jakubowski, 1976: 247; Świda-Ziemba, 2010: 132.
[3] Zaremba, 2001: 196; Finkel, 2007: 3-4.
[4] Apart from the discussion of whether the PRL was a totalitarian or authoritarian state, it could be described as a monocentric political system. Stanisław Ossowski (1967: 175-180) defined that system as a political order within which the behaviour of members of given society is led by a single decision-centre with specially appointed institutions. Simultaneously, the centre seeks to eliminate all social conflicts as an unnecessary waste of social energy. Tomas Henry Rigby (1977), with regard to the Soviet system, used the term "mono-organizational society". Those in power *a priori* treated a society as a homogenous whole without inner tensions. Nearly all social activities are run by hierarchies of appointed officials under the direction of a single overall command.
[5] According to the VII Plenum of Central Committee of PZPR, the youth were to "finish the process of building socialism in our country" and "secure the complete triumph of socialism in social life and interpersonal relations" (*VII Plenum KC PZPR 27-28.11.1972*, 61).

ple could not act independently in the official sphere, they had to follow the rules set by the authorities: "The Party should clearly state to the youth: you are at the head of the momentous process of building democracy, but at all times you should keep in sight your and the whole PRL command – the PZPR".[6]

As part of the unification process and according to the rules of Leninism, all youth structures independent of the communist authorities got abolished. The major element was the ban of 1948 on any youth activity outside the organizations controlled by the authorities. The course of the process of submitting the youth movement to the authorities and making it yet another "transmission belt" aimed at indoctrinating the young generation[7] was presented in the chapter devoted to social resistance. It helped to better understand young people's resistance.

A similar role was given to the school, which followed the official Party ideology, thus suppressing any forms of "ideological pluralism." It shaped a particular form of "axiological identity" between students – future citizens – and the ruling Party. After graduating, young people were supposed to blindly follow the Party's directives, considering them just. That is why education's aim was to inculcate "the major values of socialism," citizens' duties "necessary for establishing and developing a socialist state," and form an understanding of "the importance of the PZPR – a Marxist-Leninist party in a socialist political system".[8]

In spite of the tendency to standardize them, young people were keen observers of the socialist reality, quickly recognizing its faults. Therefore, they saw the common servility to the Soviets, discrepancies between the ideology and structural conditions (making the propagated idea of "social advancement" impossible to implement), or the domination of Party-controlled unions in the youth movement. One should also mention the axiological rejection of the communist system and its major features (class struggle, atheism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, hegemony of one party, censorship, desubjectivization of society). Anti-communism as a reason for opposition activity was especially visible in the years 1944-1956 and after the declaration of martial law. It does not mean, however, that it did not occur in other periods. In the 1960s many secret organizations in their names suggested the rejection of the system: for example, the Anti-Communist Union of Young Poles (Antykomunistyczny Związek Młodych Polaków) in Warsaw, the Union of Straggle against Communism (Związek Walki z Komunismem) in Biała Podlaska, and the Polish Anti-Communist Organization (Polska Organizacja Przeciw Komunistom) in Rzeszów. Equally significant were ties to the Roman Catholic Church and the Christian system of values. Finally, one

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[6] Gomułka, 1957: 61; Kosiński, 2006: 40.
[7] The official Polish Socialist Youth Union (Związek Socjalistystyczny Młodzieży Polskiej – ZSMP) – according to its *Statute* – propagated "among its members and among the youth the ideology of Marxism-Leninism," and its "honourable duty and right … is to prepare the best candidates for joining the PZPR."
[8] *Główne kierunki i zadania w pracy wychowawczej szkół*, 5-8.

should not forget about the example provided by the independence underground, especially during World War II (and to a lesser extent by the post-War anti-communist underground). A significant impulse toward anti-system activity was the creation of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity," (Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy "Solidarność") considered a peculiar incarnation of the drive for freedom, peaceful struggle for civil rights, and a certain project for the future. Some young oppositionists considered the Second Republic of Poland (or rather their own image of it) an example of an independent country. Thus Józef Piłsudski became the ideological patron of many opposition organizations.[9] The myth of the pre-War Poland was present in the 1950s and returned thirty years later.

In the 1980s appeared a new reason for opposition activity. Young people intended to find their own way, an "original" contribution to the fight against the system.[10] In 1985 the "Freedom and Peace" Movement (Ruch "Wolność i Pokój") was created, combining ecological and pacifistic ideas (non-violence activities) with the need to defend human and civil rights.[11] At the same time ecology became one of the major bases for movements alternative to the authorities. For the "Freedom and Peace" Movement, the Chernobyl disaster provided an impulse to engage in the protection of natural environment. Their next activities included the protest against the construction of the nuclear power plant in Żarnowiec, or protests against heavy industry factories operating in areas of exceptional ecological importance.[12]

During the last decade of the PRL, neo-anarchist movements appeared as well, with Gdańsk as their place of origin. In 1983 the Movement for Alternative Society (Ruch Społeczeństwa Alternatywnego – RSA) (five years later transformed into the Intercity Anarchist Federation – Międzymiastówka Anarchistyczna) was established in Gdańsk and its cells were created in other cities. Together with other formations it created the Alliance of Independent Groups "Freedom" (Porozumienie Grup Niezależnych "Wolność" – PGN), distancing itself from ideology, yet one of its main goals making

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[9] During 1944-1956 it was the case of the Independence Militia (Bojówka o Niepodległość) in Lublin, the Home Army Youth Military Organization (Młodzieżowa Organizacja Wojskowa AK) in Łódź, or the Union of Freedom Evolutionists (Związek Ewolucjonistów Wolności) in Międzyrzec Podlaski. The goal of the Independence Militia was to "bring up the youth according to Piłsudski's ideology in order for them to become courageous, just, and devoted people." Cf. Wołoszyn, 2007: 328. In the 1980s, the Independent Students' Association of University of Warsaw was also known as "Józef Piłsudski's Independent Students' Association University of Warsaw".

[10] The reason was the crisis of the forms of activity used by the Solidarity underground such as conspiracy methods and mass protests. Some youth organizations believed that conspiracy methods should be replaced by open resistance to the authorities' policy; Czaputowicz, 2009a: 288-290; Smółka, 2012: 26-30.

[11] The activities of the "Freedom and Peace" Movement consisted of the refusal of military oath of alliance, the refusal to accept a military service record and ID, or the so-called sittings – street demonstrations – and signing peace treaties with citizens of foreign countries (treated as a sign of reconciliation). Among other postulates were the abolishment of death penalty, disarmament, and peaceful dialogue between the East and the West; *Deklaracja ideowa Ruchu „Wolność i Pokój"*, 70-72); Czaputowicz, 2009a: 290.

[12] Antoniewicz, 2014: 52-59; Waligóra, 2014: 64-76.

the fight against the political system of the PRL.[13] The Federation of Fighting Youth (Federacja Młodzieży Walczącej – FMW) (created in 1984) attempted to combine anarchism (decentralization and federative action) and the example of the Polish Underground State during the German occupation.

One should not forget, however, that some young people were looking for their own identity and meaning of life. One of the important goals, apolitical in nature, was the creation of social and friendship relations. Marek Wierzbicki, in his study of the youth opposition during the last decade of the PRL, stresses that the most important form of youth opposition was a small group consisting of a few or a dozen or so people connected by friendship.[14]

Terminology

The youth

Before we start the analysis of the youth's attitudes during the PRL, a few terms need clarification. The first is "the youth." In the PRL, as in the rest of the world, the youth turned in to a separated social group with its specific needs, culture, music, dress code and worldview. Those in power did not want to accept that emancipation. They treated a youth only as a transitional period between a childhood and an adulthood, when all members of society acquired the knowledge and competences essential to properly preform their future social roles. They also regarded young people both as allies in transformation of existing world (the building of next stage of the socialism) and as a group the most susceptible to outside and hostile persuasion. Therefore, all process of political and social education of that generation should be run under the total control of the rulers. There was no place for uncontrolled spontaneity of youth which should be constrained and guided by official youth organizations (the "transmission belts").[15]

We could assume that this group consist of people between 15 and 25 (age criterion), thus including high school and university students, and young workers. During the PRL, that age group made for 1/5-1/6 of all citizens.[16]

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[13] In addition to the RAS, members of the PGN were: the Youth Resistance Movement in Gdańsk (Gdański Ruch Oporu Młodych), the Polish Fighting Youth (Polska Młodzież Walcząca), and the Youth Publishing House "Kres" (Młodzieżowa Oficyna "Kres"); Wierzbicki, 2013: 103.

[14] On the Genesis of the youth opposition during the PRL, see Wierzbicki, 2013: 23-31, 65-73, 101-117, 238-258; Noszczak, 2015: 729-740; Wołoszyn, 2019: 111-192.

[15] Kowalow & Łukow, 2003: 17-22, 73-75; Janssen, 2010: 35-36.

[16] In 1970, about 8 million people between 15 and 29 years' old lived in Poland; Sadowska, 2010: 34.

Opposition attitudes (resistance, dissent, political opposition)

One should also define "opposition attitudes." For the sake of clarity, they may be characterized as activities directed against the political system, including aimed at overthrowing it. Polish sources often refer to them by the term "social resistance." It describes spontaneous, unorganized activities of groups or individual people (as defined by Andrzej Friszke and Łukasz Kamiński). One could also add the distinction made by Tomasz Strzembosz between active (open and direct dissatisfaction with the Party's attempts to destroy the opposing value system) and passive (avoiding behaviours imposed by the Party without exposing oneself to direct victimization) moral resistance.[17] It is also worth to mention one of the definitions of resistance present in German studies which stresses that one of its reasons is the state's interference in the areas traditionally considered individual spheres of each citizen.[18] The resistance was the answer to the communists' activity defined by at least the majority of society as arbitrary, hegemonic and threat to the values recognized by them as important.[19]

Another term that relates to social resistance/social refusal is defiance, whether spontaneous and individual, or organized and collective, which can take shape of passive or active defiance.[20] We could also apply the term "youthful rebellion". It meant, above all, the active attitude towards the given worlds and the attempt at changing it. It could be also seen as a form of struggle for protecting the individual' subjectivity (agency) and significant for her/him universal values and norms (e.g. freedom, justice or truth).[21]

We can also use to describe the "active moral resistance" the notion of "dissent". It meant the active protest against the ruler's politics contradictory to traditional values and sense of justice. It consisted of public manifestations of disapproval of lack of

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[17] Strzembosz, 1995: 278-290; Kamiński, 1999: 46-47; Friszke, 2000: 40; Skórzyński, 2018: 87-97.

[18] Bernd Florath (2010: 34) defines resistance as attitudes and behaviours directed against particular activities of the authorities. Those behaviours were the result of old, yet still present, laws, religious and ethical norms, and the sense of social community.

[19] Bielska, 2013: 34-35, 83-90.

[20] Spontaneous individual defiance included all individual acts of rebellion against the existing order, authorities, or organizations. Group defiance requires a particular subculture (a community built around a particular style of life and ideology). Institutionalization, that is the creation of an organized political movement, party, or formal organization whose aim is not only to protest against the existing reality, but also to change it, marks the end of defiance. Passive defiance consists of lack of participation, avoiding duties and social obligations. Active defiance requires one to actively oppose the existing social system, institutions and their representatives; Paleczny, 1997: 35, 55-56.

[21] Anna Oleszkowicz (2006: 59-62) defined a „youthful rebellion" as „a clear and individually experienced need and desire to oppose and withdraw the further consent to all physical, social and psychological circumstances which the individual perceives as limiting, threatening or inconsistent with her/his idealistic expectations and ideas".

respect to human dignity, erosion and subjection of culture, constraint of the religion freedom, and subordination to the Soviet Union.[22]

The term "political opposition" may be defined as anti-system activities undertaken by young people during the PRL. There existed unofficial (illegal) opposition structures which Alfred C. Stepan, Andrzej Friszke, and Krzysztof Łabędź define as: intentional, planned, and organized resistance to integration within the regime; protection of autonomy (aimed at restoring social subjectivity); questioning the authorities' legality (aimed at changing the authorities); increasing the costs of the regime's existence, creating a plausible democratic alternative (forming a programme). For the purpose of that article "political opposition" can be defined as a more or less formalized groups. Its participators undertook intentionally political actions contradictory towards the state organization. It was aimed at changing, including even overthrowing, the existing political system, recognised as regime imposed and controlled by the external and enemy power.[23]

Subculture (alternative culture, counterculture)

Another way to manifest one's resistance to the system, both political and ethical, was through subculture, counterculture, and alternative culture. Subcultures – according to definitions – do not aim at changing the system but question its norms and values. Therefore, in this case we encounter collective defiance. Countercultures, on the other hand, aim at changing existing axiological systems and creating a better world. Finally, alternative cultures exist simultaneously with dominant and official cultures (the first one is characteristic of the majority of society, the second one is imposed by those in power upon all society).[24]

In Poland, subcultures understood as an unambiguous negation and rebellion (different dress or behaviour) were the most common case. Usually, they were small, hierarchical, and often closed groups. Therefore, all those behaviours fit into the proposal of a different style regarding free time, behaviours and attitudes. Less common were cases where axiological distinctions were made, followed by the search for an alternative. It has been pointed out that that last type of defiance appeared no sooner than in the 1970s in the form of the so-called young or open theatre, ecological movements, references to the Far East philosophy, or search for new scientific paradigms.[25] That is why the next part of the present article will be devoted to youth subcultures whose proliferation took place during the last decade of the PRL.

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[22] The difference between the notions of resistance, dissent and opposition; Skórzyński, 2018: 95-96.
[23] Stepan, 1990: 44-46; Friszke, 1994: 5; Łabędź, 1997: 16; Pałecki, 2001: 11-16; Kubát, 2010: 15-89; Skórzyński, 2018: 87-102.
[24] On the meaning of the definitions, see Pęczak, 2013: 7-22; Kuligowski, 2014: 16-25.
[25] Jawłowska, 2008.

Underground youth organizations

One should also mention various underground youth organizations that existed in the years 1944-1989 and which – of course *toutes proportions gardées* – fulfilled the requirement of organized activity. They were independent organizations, sometimes with their own internal structure, consisting of a few or a few dozen (and sometimes even a few hundred) members, admitted according to a set of rules.[26] They were created as an act of resistance to the Party's monopoly on youth activity – the aforementioned defence of autonomy and resistance to integration within the system. Members of the secret groups questioned the political legality of the communist authorities, aiming unambiguously at overthrowing them. As for their own programme (defined by Alfred C. Stepan as providing "a plausible democratic alternative"), there are certain difficulties. It must be stressed that most of the youth organizations limited their activity to what Tomasz Strzembosz defined as "civil fight" (educational action or pasting posters). Only some of them attempted to specify and give direction to their activity, adopting some features of a political movement. However, part of the young people were able to provide their own programme, specified their goals and referred to particular political ideas. Others dreamed of a future Poland created after the fall of the communist authorities (thus only some had some sort of an "alternative" in mind). Simultaneously there were attempts to share those programmes with society.

Opposition attitudes (from social resistance to political opposition)

Before we turn to presenting underground organizations formed by young people, it is worth mentioning other opposition attitudes, including the support for the opposition structures that had already existed. In the 1940s many young people sympathized with the Polish Peasant Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe – PSL), expressed their dissatisfaction with the political situation, or defended the tradition that was being destroyed by the communists. For example, scouts spoke during the Meeting "We guard the Odra river" in Szczecin (April 1946) (when the leader of the PSL, Stanisław Mikołajczyk, was applauded, while Bolesław Bierut was received with reserve); in 1946, there were protests against the abolition of the traditional Polish holiday of 3 May; January 1947, there was a strike of high school and university students. What is more, the communist youth organization, the Association of Youth Fight (Związek Walki Młodych – ZWM), was boycotted in favour of the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association (Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego – ZHP) which offered "a possibility of legal, creative activity, proposed an ideal of serving God and Poland, implementing

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[26] For the definition of an "underground youth organization", see Wołoszyn, 2019: 23-25.

humanist values and improving one's character."[27] As a result of its abolition and subordination to the Communist Union of Polish Youth (Związek Młodzieży Polskiej – ZMP) (created in 1948 as a result of forced merger of the youth political organizations[28]), young people got deprived of a possibility to act outside the official structures controlled by the Communists.

That state of affairs had lasted until October 1956, when the hope for a multi-directional youth organization got reignited. At that time the fate of the ZMP was widely discussed. Young people threw away their ZMP membership cards, unwilling to hear ever again about "the communist organization." Activists of the Rural Youth Association "Wici" (Związek Młodzieży Wiejskiej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej "Wici" – ZWM RP "Wici") (abolished in 1948), made plans to rebuild their organization (in December 1956 in Cracow the Association got unofficially recreated). Others created their own groups: the Revolutionary Youth Union (Rewolucyjny Związek Młodzieży – RZM), the Communist Youth Union (Komunistyczny Związek Młodzieży – KZM), the Union of Young Democrats (Związek Młodych Demokratów – ZMD), and many more. As a result, the "fossilized" structure of the ZMP collapsed (it was officially dissolved in January 1957). The ZMD almost got legalized, having support in large cities and rejecting the principles of Marxism.[29]

After 1957, the Party authorities managed to unify the youth movement by agreeing to three legal organizations – the Rural Youth Association (Związek Młodzieży Wiejskiej – ZMW), the Union of Socialist Youth (Związek Młodzieży Socjalistycznej – ZMS), and the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association (Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego – ZHP) – which once again became "transmission belts" for indoctrinating the young generation. At that time the PZPR – in accordance with the rules of the Leninist youth movement and the unity of the official sphere – could not allow independent unions to exist.

After 1957, young people would rather act on their own within the official unions, looking for areas of independence in the public sphere. That was the case of communist dissident groups created in the 1960s at University of Warsaw, later known as the "commandoes." They questioned the activities of the ZMS, criticizing its lack of ideology and fossilization, and participated in meetings with Party activists. The "commandoes" would become active participants of the events of March 1968.

Scout units played a similar part (for example, the "Black One" "Czarna Jedynka" in Warsaw, or independent scouting movement in Lublin established by Michał Bobrzyński who was the founder of the "Zawisza" Pack active in the local Institution for the Deaf-Mute), nurturing scouting traditions without attempting to overthrow

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[27] Persak, 1956: 12-13.

[28] On the functioning of the ZMP and the part it player in controlling the youth and submitting them to ideology, see Wierzbicki, 2006.

[29] On the youth movement during the so-called Polish October, see Sadowska, 2010: 25-72.

the system (as stated by Tomasz Strzembosz) but rather expressing their opposition to it. Simultaneously, they promoted a rival axiological system, attempting to bring up young people in accordance with it.[30] The most important feature of the independent scouting in the 1960s and the 1970s were its activities within the official ZHP. Reactivated in December 1956, the ZHP got taken over by the communist authorities, becoming, similarly to other organizations, a "transmission belt" for subjecting young people to ideological treatment.[31] Thus the independent scouting movement created peculiar enclaves within the official space, served to preserve the scouting tradition and values. Stanisław Czopowicz called this kind of independent activity "the scouting alternative flow" ("harcerski drugi nurt").[32]

Other opposition attitudes – if one could call them that – that had taken place in the 1960s and until the end of the first half of the next decade, were individual acts of protest against the authorities. For example, in 1963 students of two Warsaw high schools protested in front of the PZPR Central Committee building against deteriorating living conditions.[33] Also, acts of sabotage were committed. In 1971, Jerzy and Ryszard Kowalczyk (two brothers who did not belong to any underground organization) blew up the auditorium of School of Education in Opole where a meeting in honour of SB and MO officers was to take place (no one got hurt).[34] In early the 1970s, some young people would redistribute leaflets or write messages on walls (in Wrocław, leaflets and messages commemorating the Katyń crime appeared).

Simultaneously, young people participated in all breakthrough events connected to the social rebellion against the authorities – June 1956 (Poznań), March 1968 (which in fact was a rebellion of a whole generation), December 1970 (80% of the killed on the Coast were young people, and strike committees consisted mostly of young workers), June 1976.[35] These activities, however, may be characterized as spontaneous and unorganized.

The above situation had lasted until the second half of the 1970s, when another break in the history of the youth movement took place. An important impulse was the creation of the formal opposition whose aim was to restore the Polish society's subjectivity. There was a change of tactic of the communist regime opponents from dissident to opposition strategy.[36] It was also the time when "the generation of

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[30] Strzembosz, 2000: 137.
[31] Since 1964, scouts had taken the oath: "to serve the Polish People's Republic, be faithful to the cause of socialism" (Hausner, 2007: 128).
[32] Czopowicz, 2010: 445-446.
[33] Kosiński, 2006: 46.
[34] In October 1972, one of the Kowalczyk brothers – Jerzy – was sentenced to death, while the other – Ryszard – was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Due to the collection of 6 thousand signatures on the letter to the authorities, Jerzy's sentence was changed to life sentence.
[35] Kosiński, 2006: 51; Wierzbicki, 2009: 59.
[36] Bernhard, 1993: 9; Junes, 2022: 217-218.

subjectivity and community bond" (that is how Hanna Świda-Ziemba called people born in the years 1953–1960) began to express its anti-system opposition.[37]

The important experience for the milieus critical recognised the situation in the PRL was the protest against the repeated unification of official youth associations (ZMS and ZMW) into the single Union of Socialist Polish Youth (Związek Socjalistycznej Młodzieży Polskiej – ZSMP). That unification meant the reconstruction of the Stalinist model of youth movement. The resistance against the amendments of the Constitutions of the PRL (passed on the February 10th 1976) had also significant meaning to consolidation of those milieus. Some people rejected "the PZPR as a leading force" and "the unshakable fraternal bonds with the USRR" as the constitutional principles of the PRL's political system.[38]

Young people supported the "grown-up" opposition. The most important events of that time was the creation of the Workers' Defence Committee (Komitet Obrony Robotników – KOR) (young people sign petitions to investigate the cases of breaking the law during June 1976) or the activities of the Movement in Defence of Human and Civil Rights (Ruch Obrony Praw Człowieka i Obywatela – ROPCiO). Young people also took part in the Confederation for an Independent Poland (Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej – KPN), whose leaders believed it was necessary to include the youth in their activities. For example, in the Lublin region the "first suits" of that organization became high school and university students. One should also mention Aleksander Hall's Young Poland Movement (Ruch Młodej Polski – RMP).

Simultaneously to those events the youth attempted to form their own independent structures. Already in 1977, independent Student Solidarity Committees (Studenckie Komitety Solidarności) started to get formed at universities. Another important stimulus was the creation of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity" (NSZZ "Solidarność") – the official forum for activities independent of the Party and the state. Similarly, students formed the Independent Students' Association (Niezależne Zrzeszenie Studentów – NZS) (legalized in February 1981).[39]

At the same time, an attempt was made to recreate independent scouting. In April 1981 in Lublin, and later in Warsaw, Independent Scouting Movements (Niezależny Ruch Harcerski – NRH) units were created. In the Autumn of 1980 in Warsaw, the Andrzej Małkowski Circle of Scouting Instructors (Krąg Instruktorów Harcerskich im. Andrzeja Małkowskiego). NRH was created in response to the ZHP's lack of ideo-

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[37] Świda-Ziemba, 2010: 486-548; Gałaszewska-Chilczuk, 2016: 399-405.
[38] Choma-Jusińska, 2009: 86-95, 102-109; Junes, 2022: 211-212.
[39] An important reason for the creation of the first SKS in Cracow in May 1977 was the death of Stanisław Pyjas, a Jagiellonian University student and member of the KOR who died in unknown circumstances. Soon SKS committees were created in Warsaw, Gdańsk, Poznań, and Wrocław. On the genesis of the NZS and the role of the SKS, see Szarek, 2007: 35; Czaputowicz, 2009b: 240-252.

logical reform, as its authorities still considered the PZPR to be their ideological leaders (thus accepting ideological homogeneity imposed on scouts).[40]

At many high schools "student committees for social revival" got created, inspired by the Solidarity movement, the NZS, or RMP. For example, in the Autumn of 1980, in Gdańsk, the Movement for High School Youth (Ruch Młodzieży Szkolnej) got created, with its own periodical "Uczeń." At the same time in Wrocław the Interschool Students' Committee for Social Revival (Międzyszkolny Uczniowski Komitet Odnowy Społecznej – UKOS) got formed, with "Quo Vadis" as its periodical. A year later in Warsaw the Students' Revival Movement (Uczniowski Ruch Odnowy – URO) was formed. In the Autumn of 1980, students from high schools in Toruń created the Federation of Student Governments of High Schools in Toruń (Federacja Samorządów Szkół Średnich Miasta Torunia). Members of those organizations made their goal to propagate patriotism, national tradition, basic human values, and civil rights. They demanded the PZPR monopoly on education to be abolished and Marxism-Leninism to be removed from the curriculum.[41]

Most of those movements had dispersed structures. In September 1981, during the National Meeting of Students' Communities in Gdańsk, under the auspice of the Solidarity movement, an initiative was introduced to unite all youth organizations. The Federation of School Youth (Federacja Młodzieży Szkolnej – FMSz) was created (with "Uczeń Polski" as its periodical), its aim to become a student trade union that would represent that community in front of the authorities. The FMSz acted openly at schools, combating two important pathologies – alcoholism and drug addiction among students. In November 1981, due to personal disagreements, part of FMSz members formed their own organization, the Independent Federation of School Youth (Niezależna Federacja Młodzieży Szkolnej – NFMSz). An attempt to reunite two organizations was to be made during the meeting on 13 December 1981.

All the movements and organizations mentioned above were an alternative for the official – Party-controlled – unions. By forming them, young people attempted to create their own forum where they could share ideas: "They are still young," wrote one of the participants of the school strike in Poznań (1981) (a sixteen years' old girl), "for many of them it is the first independent step, they are insecure, they don't know if the road they've taken doesn't lead to the edge of an abyss. They can still go back – the gate is half-open, as if on purpose. Their gaze slides over the school building, over the faces of their friends, it lingers over the red and white flags ... Today many of them look at the Polish flags differently, they're here with us to support our cause. Is the cause just? They believe it is. They're done with lies and half-truths, they want to

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[40] Baran, 2007: 93.
[41] Among 23 postulates prepared on 17 December 1980 were points about the respect of opinion, personal dignity of students and teachers, and broadening the autonomy of student environments; Gulczyńska, 2013: 349; Hlebowicz, 2016: 45-56; Król, 2016: 73-84.

know the true history of Poland and want to learn it without the unpleasant feeling that they are taught things that are not true. They want to know what happened and is happening in their Homeland. They want student governments chosen in a secret ballot. They're done with silence, they want to talk about things that are important for them, they want a free tribune."[42] By creating their own structures, young people broke out from the homogeneity of the official sphere mentioned at the beginning of the present paper, creating niches one could hide in from the authorities' gaze.

The imposition of martial law, delegalization of the NZS and the Solidarity movement, put an end to the (half)official activities described above. Many young people were among the victims of martial law, either killed or put in internment camps (even eighteen-year-old persons were among internees). At that time, as during the first decade of the PRL, the opposition had to go underground. Still, the youth were the main participants of street demonstrations. They were also able to defend crosses being removed from schools (the events of 1984 in Miętne or Włoszczowa).[43]

After the imposition of martial law, the authorities once again reminded the Polish society about the homogeneity of the official sphere, once again attempting to put the youth movement in order. In July 1982, the Central Committee of the PZPR declared that there could be only four youth unions (the ZSMP, ZHP, ZMW, and Zrzeszenie Studentów Polskich – ZSP). In December 1982, the representatives of those organizations signed the agreement about the cooperation, confirming "the unity of the youth movement in Poland and its ideological connection to the PZPR."[44] Schools were also reminded about their place in the socialist work division and their ideological tasks.

Half-official youth activities started again in the second half of the 1980s. In 1986 -1987, the NZS got reactivated (formally, still illegal) and its members got control over some of student governments. They were also responsible for organizing youth opposition activities (for example, strikes and ceremonies commemorating the twentieth anniversary of March 1968).

The end of the last decade of the PRL was marked by the appearance of new forms of opposition. One of them was an attempt to show the absurdity of the political situation and the regime of the time. It was to be achieved through laughter at the authorities, their actions, and the regime with its tradition and symbols. Street

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[42] List Małgorzaty Sz. (16 lat): Strajk w szkole w Poznaniu, jesień 1980 r. (after: Kosiński, 2002: 308).
[43] The events concerned the students of Agricultural School Complex in Miętne near Garwolin and Trade School Complex in Włoszczowa who rebelled against the headmaster's decision to remove crosses from the classrooms. In both cases the young people were told that the school would get dissolved and they would get deprived of the right to study. In March 1984 the students in Miętne started a sit-down strike. A similar protest was organized in the second school in December 1984. The Party authorities used those events as a pretext to attack the Catholic Church, both local priests (two vicars from Włoszczowa, Father Marek Łabuda and Father Andrzej Wilczyński, were sentenced to prison and given a fine) and the Polish Episcopate; Dudek & Gryz, 2003: 406-410.
[44] Janik, 1985: 64.

happenings became a form of rebellion conducted during national holidays – the anniversary of the October Revolution or the establishment of the PRL. All those actions were accompanied by street parades with participants dressed as dwarves or Santa Clause (allusions to the red colour, attempts to mentally unify society, and the image of the "good authorities" caring about their citizens). During the happenings cardboard tanks and slogans such as "The Warsaw Pact – the vanguard of freedom," or "The Army your mother" would appear. Those activities were conducted by the movement known as the Orange Alternative (Pomarańczowa Alternatywa), established by the oppositionist Waldemar Frydrych "Major" first in Wrocław, and then in other cities.[45] Similar happenings were conducted by the members of other youth movements – the FMW, RSA, KPN, or NZS.

Youth conspiracy

In addition to the semi-official activities, practically during the whole existence of the PRL young people formed underground organizations. Their greatest proliferation took part in 1949-1953 and at the beginning of the eighth decade (especially after the imposition of martial law). During Stalinism – according to the data collected by the Institute of National Remembrance – 678 organizations were created, consisting of 7,5 thousand people (about 67% of all underground youth organizations active between 1944 and 1956). From 1944 to 1956, young people in Poland had established over 1000 organizations consisting of about 11 thousand people.[46] In the 1960s and the 1970s, the youth conspiracy was no longer as numerous as in the previous decade. Between 1964 and 1967 the security service – according to Mieczysław Moczar – had uncovered 68 underground youth organizations. In 1970 there were twelve secretes associations detained by employees of the apparatus of repression in whole country. Those organizations costing 140 persons. In 1973 and 1974 SB officers uncovered nine secret groups consisting of 59 members.[47]

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[45] The Orange Alternative had its mutations in other regions as well; for example, the Orange Alternative of the Łódź Diocese – Pomarańczowa Alternatywa Diecezji Łódzkiej (the Gallery of Manic Activities), the Committee for the Defence of Red Riding Hoods – Komitet Obrony Czerwonych Kapturków (Poznań), or the Gdańsk Pink Alternative – Gdańska Różowa Alternatywa; *Wszyscy proletariusze bądźcie piękni!*, 7-38; Wierzbicki, 2013: 217.

[46] Poleszak *et al.*, 2020: LXXVI-LXXVII.

[47] Between 1957-1970, there were 23 secret groups in the Łódź province, and eight in Warsaw at the same time; AIPN, BU, 0296/166, vol. 3, The list of affairs and information concerning illegal organizations and associations detected by SB in 1970, Warszawa, January 30th 1971, pp. 80B; Noszczak, 2015: 511-558; Wójcik, 2016: 58-59; Wąs, 2020: 135-136.

In the first half of the 1980s youth conspiracy had grown again, especially after the imposition of martial law. In 1982, the SB uncovered 185 groups (most of them during the first half of 1982 – around 102).[48]

It is worth mentioning that in the 1950s and the 1980s the majority of underground organizations consisted of the youth. According to Andrzej Paczkowski, during Stalinism the youth were "the most numerous group to engage in active – although often naive and badly organized – resistance."[49] Thirty years later, half of the underground organizations uncovered by the security service would consist of young people as well. Thus once again they would replace the weakened grown-up underground.

In addition, the phenomenon of the youth conspiracy coincided with periods of unstable international situation – for example, from 1961 to 1963 (the second Berlin crisis and the Cuban crisis – some hopes for another world war conflict) about 95 groups had been created. Nine high school students from Lublin – if one is to believe the files of the security service – were at that time preparing for "the war over Berlin."[50]

The accused were given severe sentences. In the 1950s many death sentences were carried out.[51] In later years courts would not sentence people to death, although members of underground organizations would be given long prison sentences.[52]

One should also consider the social background of young people involved in underground activity. In the 1950s most of them came from what the propaganda of the time called "class-related" backgrounds. In 1954, 62% of the young activists detained by the repression apparatus came from workers' families, and 16% came from peasant families. Two decades later (1970) almost 63% of members of secrets group were the workers' children, and 34% of them came from intelligentsia milieu. During martial law, workers' young people were once again the largest group involved in the underground activity (about 64%), while the second largest group were children of the intelligentsia (31%).[53] Therefore one additional remark should be made. The existence of the youth underground organizations was both the result of the communists'

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[48] AIPN, BU, 01521/1464, The anti-social and anti-state activities of youth organizations in Poland in 1980-1982, pp. 10, 15. For details on the youth underground and opposition activities in the 1980s, see Wierzbicki, 2010: 359-385.

[49] Paczkowski, 2000: 12.

[50] Kosiński, 2006: 46.

[51] According to the lists of death sentences given by courts in Katowice, Cracow, Lublin, Łódź, Poznań, Rzeszów, Warsaw, and Wrocław, there were 53 such sentences, 23 of which were carried out.

[52] In the case of "Movement," ("Ruch") the highest sentences were given to its founders, Andrzej Czuma and Stefan Niesiołowski – seven years in prison – and Benedykt Czuma – six years in prison. Marian Gołębiewski, Bolesław Stolarz, and Emil Morgiewicz were sentenced to four years in prison; Byszewski, 2003: 61; Dudek, 2016: 255-276.

[53] AIPN, BU, 0296/31, vol. 12, The information concerning illegal activities of the youth preventively liquidated in 1954, Warszawa, February 16th 1955, pp. 2; AIPN, BU, 0296/166, vol. 3, pp. 81; *Nielegalne organizacje i grupy młodzieży*, 76.

attempts to subjugate the young generation, and the testimony to partial futility of those endeavours.

The proposition of the Catholic Church

The Catholic Church offered the young people a particular space free of ideology, a space which was usually met with enthusiasm. Already in the 1950s clergymen found new ways of working with the young generation. After all Catholic organizations got suspended (1949), the most important task became developing a way priests could work with their parishioners. The youth could attend religious instructions conducted outside the school (in the 1950s, almost all members of school ZMPs would attend them). In 1964, 16 thousand catechesis points existed (at that time, there were 28 thousand primary and high schools).[54] Priests would organize at their parsonages sport events, theatre groups, libraries, movie screenings, or summer camps. All those activities were meant to make the ministry more attractive for the youth.

During the following years the Catholic Church had even more to offer to young people. Already in 1954 Father Franciszek Blachnicki started the Oasis for God's Children movement (in 1976 renamed the "Light-Life" Movement – Ruch "Światło Życie"). The movement gradually spread, in the 1970s covering the whole country and consisting of young people from different backgrounds (in the next decade it consisted of 50 thousand members).[55] The main goal of the movement was to give religious upbringing to young people and strengthen their faith during summer retreats (often connected with holiday rest, during which teachers were not grown-ups, but young people). In the 1980s priests and monks would also attend the Jarocin music festival in an attempt to connect with young people and indirectly evangelize them.

The Student Ministry, whose rapid growth dates back to the 1970s, played an equally important part in shaping young people's awareness.[56] It often became the place of origin of many oppositional groups. For example, one could mention people linked to the Dominican Ludwik Wiśniewski in Lublin and Gdańsk. Some of the monk's listeners would soon create the illegal periodical "Niezależne Pismo Młodych Katolików – Spotkania." Members of the Gdańsk group would join the RMP. It cannot be excluded that in case of Father Wiśniewski and his "protégés" an important factor was independence in reaching the truth (so different than the uniform – Marxist – interpretation of events imposed at schools).[57]

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[54] AAN, KC PZPR 237/XVI-506, Letter of the Min[ister] of Ed[ucation] to Cardinal S[tefan] Wyszyński concerns "Słowo pasterskie biskupów polskich" of 4 September [1964], Warszawa, 25 September 1964, k. 46-51.
[55] Żaryn, 2003: 193-194.
[56] In 1976, there were 224 centres; Jarkiewicz, 2002.
[57] During the meetings with Father Wiśniewski, such issues were raised as breaking freedom of speech or human rights in the PRL; Choma-Jusińska, 2007.

The youth found in the Catholic Church's proposition role models very different from those preferred by the state education or official youth organizations (in the middle of 1950s, the greatest resistance of the Party authorities – constantly proclaiming the fight with "enemies of the people" – was caused by the idea of neighbourly love and later the theory of social solidarity[58]). Simultaneously, the Catholic Church offered to young people a sense of community bond through such organizations as the "Light -Life" Movement or the Catholic Charismatic Revival.

Subcultures

Another way of expressing one's resistance to the official educational model which anticipated mental unification of the whole society, was young people's accession to various subcultures. Marek Pęczak divided them into two categories – bohemians ("soft" subcultures) and gangs ("hard" subcultures).[59] The former, based on free access of adepts and sympathizers, included bikiniarze, hippies, anarcho-punks. The latter – rooted in the hierarchical and closed tradition of the criminal underground – included hooligans, gits, or skinheads. The present analysis is interested only in the subculture named by Marek Pęczak the bohemians. One should also mention that almost all Polish subcultures had their roots in Western culture and were the sign of fascination with that world, which did not result in the Party's approval.

The first Polish subculture was created at the turn of 1940s and 1950s and its origin – of course *tout proportions gardées* – can be traced back to the clothes sent from the West. Its members were known as the so-called bikiniarze, whose colourful clothes and fondness of the forbidden jazz ("American music") posed a challenge for the authorities during Stalinism (the period with the greatest stress put on uniformity). In addition, they may be seen as the fanatics of American mass culture (whose elements crossed the Iron Curtain). In that case the colourful clothes and jazz music became particular manifestations of nonconformity.[60] Their "resistance" to the system consisted of direct negation of the cultural models it promoted. In the specific atmosphere of 1950s their behaviour must have been perceived as a political provocation – an action inspired and directed by "hostile centres." That is why the bikiniarze were combated by the official propaganda and the communist ZMP. The media

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[58] AAN, ZG ZMP, 451/VI-10, The evaluation of anti-people activities of the reactionary clergy among the youth [1953], k. 111. In 1985 Krzysztof Janik (1985: 80) warned that the threat to Marxism-Leninism in Poland was posed by "The popularity among our society of the idea of solidarity and its propagators (for example, the Church), and foreign centres of sabotage propaganda."; According to Janik, those factors increased young people's distrust of Marxism.

[59] Pęczak, 2013: 11; For a detailed list of youth subcultures during the PRL see Kosiński, 2006: 386-388.

[60] They had their counterparts in other socialist countries. In Czechoslovakia, such a person was called a "potápka" – duck – or "gejblik," in Romania a malagambista, in East Germany – "der Halbstarker" – half-strength/hooligan, and in Hungary – "jampecek" – loafer. For more details on the bikiniarze, see Chłopek, 2005.

put the bikiniarze on a par with hooligans (which to some extent was true, especially after the movement got disseminated). Of course the subculture and its members had no links to the political resistance, the fact stressed even by the official media. The events of October of 1956 put an end to the movement.

During the following decades youth subcultures did not play a crucial part in young people's lives. During that time existed only three groups: the gits, hooligans, and hippies. The latter appeared in Poland at the end of the 1960s, immediately drawing SB's attention. The Polish hippies – contrary to their Western counterparts – rather did not oppose consumer culture, as it was non-existent. That is why that group rejected the existing system – including real socialism with its authoritativeness and oppressiveness. Simultaneously – similarly to the bikiniarze – the hippies attempted to escape from the everyday monotony and uniformity.[61] Hippie groups would appear in large cities and their members would come from intelligentsia's or office workers' families.

Youth subcultures bloomed in the 1980s. At that time, as a reaction to the ubiquitous crisis – both economic and social (disintegration of social ties, disparagement of basic values, and growing anonymity) – young people were looking for a sense of belonging, mutual respect, and peer solidarity.[62] Participating in subcultures, or even listening to music – especially rock – became one of the forms of resistance to the political (official) system and social reality. Simultaneously it helped to reclaim one's sense of subjectivity and escape exclusion. At that time skinheads, Rastafarians, fans of Depeche Mode, football fans, anarchists, or punks appeared. All those groups were distinct from the rest of society regarding clothes, haircuts, or music they listened to. The punks were the most hostile to the official, dominant norms, at the same time being the most numerous youth subculture. The most important element that united all those subcultures – in spite of their differences and hostilities between particular groups – was the defiance to all elites and values (including those shared by the opposition).[63]

Conclusions

The aim of the present article was to provide a general look on the selected opposition attitudes of young citizens of the PRL. If we consider the achievements of independent youth organizations – official, semi-official, and unofficial – we may notice their symbolic dimension. Their members, especially during the 1980s, would demand civil rights, would protest against the authorities' abuse of power, and – in spite of limited range – all those activities would take place in the open, for the whole

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[61] Pęczak, 2013: 68.
[62] Wierzbicki, 2013: 233.
[63] Kosiński, 2006: 359.

society to see (thus directly undermining the political legitimization of the authorities). During their existence, the youth organizations shared means of action (especially the so-called little sabotage, or propaganda and self-educational activities). The youth underground organizations would participate in the fight against the communist dictatorship next to the "grown-up underground." All those groups contributed to (although the extent of the contribution is difficult to evaluate) weakening the system (increasing the costs of maintaining it), which resulted in its collapse. Through illegal publications they weakened the authorities' monopoly on information. The independent youth movements also contributed to the creation of a (alternative) civil society which had been destroyed in Poland almost forty years earlier.

Considering these factors, the independent youth organizations may be categorized as informal social movements. They aimed at restoring subjectivity to young people and fulfilling important social and national goals. They shared an important goal: to either reform or overthrow the political regime. Simultaneously they provided a defence against the system's control over all spheres of life and its attempts to unify them.[64] In early 1950s, members of the Democratic Home Army (Demokratyczna Armia Krajowa) of Godowa (in the Rzeszów region) would therefore "take up a fight for justice as the inheritors of liberating ideas of the time. We stand and we fight. Demanding justice, attempting to awaken national pride, love of all free nations, we need to accept this fight with courage and full ... devotion."[65] Thirty years later, the Independent Youth Movement (Niezależny Ruch Młodzieżowy) in Gorzów Wielkopolski would anticipate the fight over democracy, human and civil rights in Poland, "freedom, equality, and social justice," "societal home rule" and "economic progress."[66]

It should also be mentioned that in the first decade of the PRL, underground organizations did not create national structures. Such attempts were made no sooner than in the 1980s. The FMW, established in 1984 and supported by the underground Solidarity movement, was to unify the youth underground. It included numerous groups and student communities in over 50 cities.[67] The "Freedom and Peace" Movement (created in 1985) also became a national organization, combining pacifism, Christianity, ecology, anarchism, and liberalism.

In order to analyse how the ideas and aims of the youth underground got concretized, one should refer to numerous programmes (for example, statutes such as *Mijają lata* of the "Freedom and Peace" Movement). These ideas and aims may be also recreated from leaflets or illegal periodicals released by the independent groups, for example, "Czyn" of the Underground Scouting Organization "Iskra" (Harcerska Podziemna Organizacja "Iskra") "Zarzewie" of the Union of the White Shield (Związek Białej

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[64] For a detailed analysis of the youth opposition as a social movement, see Wierzbicki, 2014: 5-8.
[65] After: Wójcik, 2009: 352.
[66] Wierzbicki, 2010: 366-367.
[67] Licbarski, 2005: 129-171.

Tarczy) in Łódź, "Szaniec" of the Independent Youth Movement in Gorzów Wielko-polski, "Monit" of the FMW, "Pokolenie" of the Interschool Coordinating Committee "Youth Solidarity," or "Homek" of the RSA. Therefore, there were features characteristic for "political opposition." For example, the aims of the FMW in Gdańsk included: "1. Fight for the national and political awareness of the youth .... 2. Limiting the state's monopoly on information through the publication of independent periodicals .... 3. Forming active attitudes of the young generation..."[68] Already twenty years earlier the "Freedom and Peace" Movement would state in *Mijają lata* as its goals fight for the restoration of the independent Poland, restoring parliamentary democracy, and establishing cooperation with other countries of East-Central Europe.[69] The neo-anarchist RSA – according to its Manifesto – was to provide an alternative to the socialist society, one where an individual would be free from the communist oppression and, more importantly, would be given an opportunity of free development. It should be stressed, however, that RSA members believed all normative systems to enslave individuals, including the one proposed by the opposition (they believed it to be as totalitarian as the communist regime) – a man should not be enslaved by any dogma.[70]

The vision of the world proposed by the youth opposition extended beyond the Polish borders, including world and regional problems. The pacifist groups recognized the need for disarmament and removal of atomic threat. One of the FMW's aims was to normalize relations between the nations of East-Central Europe – to unite them. There were also voices calling for integration within European structures. At the end of the 1980s, programmes regarding the restoration of the independent Poland mentioned the need to "create a union of countries situated between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea, and enter the uniting Europe as an organized union." It further claimed that national minorities should be granted rights and all arguments between nations should be settled by national parliaments established in free elections.[71] Struggle for national independence of countries belonging to the USSR, especially Lithuania, was also supported. During the 1950s, members of the underground youth organizations would discuss the world order and Poland's place in it. At least in a few cases attempts were made to answer the question about the shape of the world (and especially Europe) after the fall of communism. Members of the Frontier Army advocated the idea of the United States of Europe with the government in Warsaw.[72] During their meetings, students of the Polish National-Catholic Party in Lublin would discuss the geopolitical syllo-

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[68] After: Wierzbicki, 2013: 127.
[69] Byszewski, 2003: 42-63.
[70] In their Manifesto, members of the RSA also postulated property, money, and "the economy based on exploitation and growth" to be abolished; Antonów, 2004: 170-171.
[71] Wąsowicz, 2008: 276-277.
[72] The founder of the organization, Adam Kantor, wrote about representatives of Western countries establishing the "European Government of the United States" (Wójcik, 2009: 301).

gism of Halford John Mackinder,[73] especially the theory of the heartland and its implications for the fate of Poland. Some organizations in their ideas about the future of the Old Continent would include plans devised before World War II, namely "the consolidation of the countries of East-Central Europe" and creation of a federation. The programme of the Democratic Home Army in Godów (the Rzeszów region) mentions the creation of one great federation consisting of Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, and Ruthenia, and the Freedom and Independence Movement in Jaworzno aimed at uniting Poland and Lithuania into one country.

Finally, young underground activists of 1944-1956, contrary to colleagues 30 years their junior, usually did not consider themselves to be a "political opposition." For most of them the most important issue was the conflict of values defined as freedom – political and social – being the condition of struggle for independence. As claimed by Zbigniew Brzeziński, it was not the resistance to totalitarianism as such, and "its origin [was] rooted in national freedom and patriotism."[74] The most important for the youth was the struggle against the imposed government, treated as the symbol of subjection to the foreign country. Equally important during the existence of the PRL was the creation of a sphere (no matter how small) independent of the communist authorities.

Another important issue is the question whether the members of subcultures could be called oppositionists. One can assume that subcultures had little connection to political struggle, even though the authorities did not see them that way. The authorities considered subcultures to be their "pedagogical failure" which should be immediately corrected. At the same time, the authorities believed those groups to be the result of activities of their political opponents. It should be also pointed out that subcultures were stigmatized by the whole society and were believed to be the cradle of criminal activities and addictions (the bikiniarze, hippies, or punks).

In addition, a distinction must be made between the official culture (favoured by the authorities, imposed in the public sphere – for example, at schools – and highly ideological) and the dominant culture (the true source of norms and values that would determine society's behaviours and would become the basis for the evaluation of the world and others). Both those cultures would be called into question as being in the majority. The members of subcultures created „the third circuit". It was alternative to the official as well as opposition one.[75]

Therefore, in most cases the actions of youth subcultures were not political in nature. Those people were interested in the community of new values and finding new

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[73] Halford John Mackinder's theory, developed at the beginning of the 20th century and later reworked, stated that there existed the heart of the land (heartland) (in the 1919 version) – the area of the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea basins and Central-Eastern Europe – and whoever controlled it, would rule the world (Jean, 2003: 66-69). The inhabitants of the post-War Poland found the theory appealing for it justified the need to defy a world power (the USSR) that aimed at controlling that "heart."
[74] After: Habuda, 2001: 57.
[75] Pęczak, 2016: 165-182.

ways of self-expression. Their goal was an identity and cultural change of society, not the political and social reconstruction (their aim was not the reformation or overthrow of the regime). If one were to speak about a form of social resistance (oppositional attitudes), it consisted of a withdrawal from the official sphere to an independent enclave in order to protect one's freedom. Members of subcultures differed from the rest of society in their behaviour, dress, music taste, and occasional drug use.[76] They shared with the political opposition the resistance to the existing reality, but their aims were different. In both cases we can see elitist activities performed by persons distinct from the rest of society. In addition, young people found another feature of subcultures particularly important. In most cases subcultures referred to the Western style of life, or a certain image of that life. Thus they allowed "to escape or mentally 'emigrate' to the spheres that were inaccessible in everyday life."[77]

To conclude that brief and incomplete overview of numerous oppositional attitudes of young people during the PRL, it is worth pointing out that regarding the number of their participants, those activities had never been a significant social phenomenon (they were rather elitist). Active defiance is never a feature of the majority.[78] If we consider 5 million citizens between the age of 15 and 25, then between 1944 and 1956, or during the imposition of martial law, only a dozen or so thousands of them had participated in underground activities. Most of the youth would rather show a-system attitudes and would be reluctant to engage in political activities, either official or unofficial. Passive attitudes did not indicate, however, that young people felt no sympathy towards their peers who engaged in underground activities.[79]

Simultaneously, most citizens would remain passive, playing by the system's rules. In order not to be bothered, the Poles would make an "internal compromise with the system." One of the agreements of that unwritten contract stated that the citizens would avoid any situation that could directly threaten the existing political order. Those behaviours were a part of individual and collective survival (self-preserving) strategies

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[76] It is worth mentioning part of Krzysztof Varga's statement from Maria Zmarz-Koczanowicz's movie *Pokolenie 89*: "If I contested, then I did it not by engaging in opposition activities, but by attending punk-rock concerts, drinking cheap wine, smoking marijuana, and such stuff," (after: Kuligowski, 2014: 18).

[77] Burszta, 2011: 72.

[78] Małgorzata Choma-Jusińska (2009: 399), analysing opposition milieus in the Lublin region during the second half of the 1970s, stated that there were about 40 active oppositionists and over 20 people helped them. Andrzej Friszke (1994: 590) ascertained that at the same time in Poland about 1000-1500 people conducted opposition activity. However, the number of most active was ca. 300-500.

[79] Fragment of a recollection of a high school student (1979-1983) from Bydgoszcz: "I wasn't an activist not out of fear, but because of the business. I looked at all that, the tanks and clubs on the one hand, and leaflets and beautiful speeches on the other, and I simply didn't believe it. And martial law explained it all,"(after: Gulczyńska, 2013: 348-349); In the next passages the same person confesses that he was happy because of the events of August 1980. But for him sport became a form of escape from the grey and hopeless reality.

necessary to survive in the socialist system.[80] Young people – similarly to the whole society – were rather interested in life stability, gaining education, a good job and a happy family life. In other words, to paraphrase a popular song by *Perfect*, a TV, furniture, and Fiat 126p were the climax of one's dreams. Therefore, two of the four Leslie Holmes' attitudes towards the regime were dominant in Poland: positive acceptance and negative acceptance.[81]

To summarize, presented opposition attitudes were characteristic for the certain group of young people (since, only a handful of them were involved in those activities). They attempted at finding their own place outside of the univocal and uniformed public sphere (controlled by the rulers). It was also the way to avoid the integration within regime and protect one's freedom, dignity, values and subjectivity. Thus, young people both denied the ruling party's monopoly of supervision of all social activity, including the youth movement, and the "axiological" identity imposed by those in power. Presented attitudes, therefore, meant in some way the partial negation of the rulers' legitimacy to exercise the power, especially on the axiological issues.

The present text did not discuss the attitudes of young people at the end of the 1980s, that is during the preparatory stage of the system transformation. At that time the youth movements got reactivated and the youth opposition moved in a different direction than the grown-up oppositionists. In 1988 and 1989 high school and university students initiated the first wave of protest that would precipitate the erosion of the system. What is more, at that time the youth opposition changed. It transformed into a more formal movement with hierarchical structure and its leaders to some extent became similar to "professional revolutionaries."[82] Simultaneously, ordinary members became more passive, participating only in larger actions. At the same time, some representatives of the oppositional movements – for example, the "Freedom and Peace" Movement, or the RMP – rejected the compromise with the representatives of the *ancien régime.* Finally, 1989 marked the end of many oppositional organizations, for the change of the political system they postulated took place. Most of them did not develop the grounds for more formal political structures – political parties that would act as a part of the official political rivalry. Therefore, a thesis may be put forward that

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[80] Świda-Ziemba, 2010: 520; Marody, 2001: 137. Self-preserving strategies are connected to striving for survival in a changing world. They are also conditioned on the implementation of the so-called egoistic values – fulfilment of material needs, need for social significance, and need for security (Narojek, 2011: 184-185).

[81] The first indicated that citizens did not want the change of the political system. However, they were critical of its elements, not showing enthusiasm toward it. In the second case, citizens did not accept the regime, although were not ready to overthrow it. The other two attitudes included full support for the authorities (positive acceptance) or active rejection (willingness to act in order to overthrow the regime); Holmes, 1988: 117.

[82] Wierzbicki, 2010: 277-278.

small oppositional groups that were accustomed to spontaneous actions could not adapt to mass actions that use the tools of political marketing.[83]

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[83] Kaelble, 2010: 238.

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