

The Conference

Solidarity in Polish, Central European and Global History: Inspirations and Interpretations

Program and Abstracts



Conference Venue

DS Jowita, Zwierzyńska Street 7, hall A,
June 22-23, 2023, Poznań

Organizatorzy/organizers

Institute of National Remembrance, Poznań Division

Faculty of Philosophy, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

Polish Philosophical Society, Poznań Division

Research Centre for the Humanities,
Centre of Excellence of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Patronat/Patronage

NSZZ Solidarność, Region Wielkopolska

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Program

First Day of Conference: Thursday, June 22, 2023

9:30-10:00: Opening/Otwarcie

10:00 - 10:40

Sławomir Magala (Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam/Warsaw University), ***Solidarność: Medium, Message and Legacy***

10:40 – 11:00. Discussion/dyskusja

11:00 – 11:20. Coffee break/przerwa kawowa

11:20 – 13:00

Discussion over the book of Miklós Mitrovits, *Zakazane kontakty. Współpraca opozycji polskiej i węgierskiej 1976–1989 (The Forbidden Contacts. Cooperation of Polish and Hungarian Opposition in Years 1976-1989)* with participation of Konrad Białecki (Faculty of History at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań/the Historical Research Office of the Institute of National Remembrance, Poznań Branch), Gábor Lagzi (Liszt Institute - Hungarian Center of Culture, Warsaw) and Miklós Mitrovits (Institute of History, Research Centre for the Humanities, Centre of Excellence of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences).

Moderator: Krzysztof Brzechczyn (Faculty of Philosophy at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań / The Historical Research Office of the Institute of National Remembrance, Poznań Division)

Session I: Solidarność and the West, Thursday, June 22, 2015

Chair: Cristina Petrescu

14:30-15:00

Piotr Długołęcki (The Polish Institute of International Affairs), ***The Polish Crisis 1980–1982 from Western Perspective***

15:00-15:30

Małgorzata Świder (Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny, im. KEN w Krakowie), ***The Western Left Wing and Solidarity, 1980-1981***

15:30-16:00. Discussion /dyskusja

16:00-16:30. Coffee break/ przerwa kawowa

Session II: Solidarność and the East, Thursday, June 22, 2015

Chair: David Darchiashvili

16:30-17:00

Cristina Petrescu (Faculty of Political Science, University of Bucharest), ***Odd Perceptions: The Polish Solidarity in Romania***

17:00- 17:30

Daniel Filip-Afloarei (The Institute for the Investigation of the Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile), ***Romania and the Solidarity Crisis of 1980-1981: a Different Approach?***

17:30-18:00. Discussion/dyskusja

Second Day of Conference: Friday, June 23, 2023

Session III: The Interpretations of Solidarność

Chair: Dragos Petrescu

9:00 – 9:30

Roman Bäcker (Faculty of Political Sciences and International Studies, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń), *Processes of Empowerment of a Political Nation. The Case of Solidarity 1980-1981*

9:30-10:00

Jarosław Chodak (Institute of Sociology UMCS in Lublin) *Solidarność 1980-81 from the Perspective of the Theories of Revolution*

10:00-10:30

Krzysztof Brzechczyn (Faculty of Philosophy at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań / the Historical Research Office of the Institute of National Remembrance, Poznań Branch), *Transformations of Solidarność and Fate of its Ideological Heritage in years 1989-1991*

10:30-11:00. Discussion/dyskusja

11:00-11:30. Coffe break/przerwa kawowa

Session IV: Solidarność and the Downfall of Communism

Chair: Krzysztof Brzechczyn

11:30-12:00

Liubov Krupnyk (Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance), *The Cooperation of Dissidents from the USSR with Solidarity*

12:00-12:30

David Darchiashvili (Ilia State University), *The Furthest Resonance of "Solidarity": Georgia's Patchy Road to Democracy*

12:30-13:00

Dragos Petrescu (Faculty of Political Science, University of Bucharest), *Polish Solidarity and the "Snowballing Effect: Looking Retrospectively to the Outbreak of the 1989 Revolutions*

13:00-13:30

Patryk Pleskot (The Historical Research Office of the Institute of National Remembrance, Warsaw Branch), *How to escape from revolution? Western diplomacy towards Polish political transformation in 1989*

13:30-14: 00. Discussion//dyskusja

14:00-14:10. Closing remarks/zamknięcie konferencji

Abstracts and Biograms

Prof. Sławomir Magala

Rotterdam University/Warsaw University

Solidarność: Medium, Message and Legacy

Let me begin on an autobiographical note. When I handed the typescript of “Class Struggle in Classless Poland” to Michael Albert from the Bostonian South End Press in late November 1981, my personal experience of a successful insertion of the free trade unions into the unfree institutional landscape of the Polish People’s Republic has not yet been overshadowed by the coup d’etat performed by the communist secret services two weeks later. Today, 42 years later, the dust has not settled yet and the clatter of class struggle is still thundering in social media, but some rough outlines of what had happened emerge in the light of what we know and of what we know that we do not know.

Solidarność as a **medium** of political action and as the message of social change has been found and/or founded in 1976, when the working class of Radom in central Poland went on strike against the rising food prices. Their protest action was the most significant response of the communist-ruled Polish society looking at the ways of breaking the triple power of the communist ruling elite at the time. The industrial workers, who had successfully protested food price rises, were exposed to repressions immediately afterwards. The rest of the civil society did not watch nomenklatura’s revenge passively. A “silent majority” of citizens immediately felt solidarity with the repressed strike organizers. This solidarity had been articulated as a defense of the industrial workers, who were scapegoated and exposed to repressions. The Radom workers had been beaten up, fired from their jobs and imprisoned after the protest wave had ended. But contrary to the expectations of the ruling class of the communist “nomenklatura”, the protest wave had not ended. Solidarity acquired second life due to the creation of The Committee for Defense of the Workers” (in Polish – Komitet Obrony Robotników, KOR), which had emerged as a social invention of political solidarity. Four years later, in August 1980, another strike of industrial workers erupted in the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk.

The idea of solidarity of free citizens in face of hostile and authoritarian power has been already haunting the ruling elites, when a medium of free, independent, self-managed trade unions has been found. Contemporary solidarity has been invented as a general trade union of the employees of state-owned companies in August 1980. The first politically and institutionally successful anti-communist mass movement in central Europe had reached the rest of the societies on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain. Independent trade union as a medium of liberating civil society had challenged the other satellite state elites and had triggered protests, which broke the power of the Russian regime in central and eastern Europe between 1980 and 2000.

The challenging **message** came in the guise of a minority proposal – namely an open letter to the working class of central and eastern Europe, in which a political goal of reducing the triple power of the communist nomenklatura had been clearly articulated and announced. When the European context of the iron curtain prompted Kornel Morawiecki and other radicals among the new trade union activists to write an open letter to the working class of the communist-dominated Europe, moderate trade union activists attempted to silence them as too extreme in their demands. Through the cunning of democratic reason in history – the radicals won. They saw the future of all enslaved subjects of the communist-held societies, and they wrote an open letter suggesting that it might work. They were right. Not immediately, but

within two decades, the largest communist held state, Soviet Union, collapsed, Not immediately, but within four decades, the latest embodiment of the Russian nomenklatura is trying to survive in a disappearing empire locked into a vicious circle of fossil fuels, ethnic cleansing and military conquest.

The reconstruction of the Polish social movement of “Solidarność”, which organized a protest strike designed to reinstate fired employees and invented a free and independent trade union as a medium of political action, social change and general progress would not be complete without accounting for lost battles and opportunities. The international message of the movement was that triple hold of the communist power elites on economic, political and cultural institutions of a faked civil society should be broken. Moreover, it should be broken in solidarity with the other victims of the same oppression. Open letter has been sent, acknowledged in the media, but an opportunity for an early mobilization of international solidarity for a joint action outside of control of the triple power elites has been lost. The empire of the united nomenklaturas struck back.

The round table negotiations about the postcommunist transitions demonstrated the power of the nomenklatura to design the stage and script the roles for the postcommunist politics. Networks within the secret service managed the capital accumulation through the theft of state assets on a large scale. The (almost) invisible hand of the secret informers of the communist secret police has still been strong enough to slow-down the process of eliminating the former nomenklatura networks from public life. Donald Tusk’s coup de etat of June 4th, 1992 is a case in point. The coup d’etat supported by the president, Lech Walesa, an ex-agent of the communist secret police, ended the government of prime minister Olszewski and stopped the removal of the communist secret service agents and informers from the public life. This undermining of all reforms of the public institutions meant a slowdown of the post-communist reconstruction of solidarity. This slowdown led to the consolidation of the new power elite (bound by dirty secrets of collaboration with the secret services before the fall of communism or complicity in appropriation of state assets by nomenklatura during and after the fall of communism). A large scale *trahison des clerks* (aided by the *trahison des agents secrets*) took place.

And yet, we can talk today about the **legacy** of “Solidarity”. Solidarity not only in a historical sense of what was on the buttons with the new trade union’s logo. There are grounds to believe that solidarity of August 1980 has been re-found in February 2022. Intuitively so by the rank-and file Polish citizens with their (our, actually) experience of a civil society, consciously so by the Polish central government and by the local authorities. A spontaneous, grass-roots solidarity with the underdogs, reminiscent of 1980 forty years earlier, has re-emerged in 2022. This time it was a response of the majority of the Polish citizens spontaneously invented to counter Russian power elite’s attempts to rebuild the totalitarian empire. Solidarity has been re-found, reinvented and recreated by the Polish people and the Polish state in order to assist the Ukrainians in defeating the Russian invasion. War continues and so does solidarity. Will the large numbers of the Ukrainian immigrants employed in the Polish economy, studying in Polish schools and upwardly mobile in the ranks of both the Polish labor force and professional hierarchies increase solidarity and trust in Polish civil society, inside the European communities, and beyond?

Let us list the elements of the **legacy** of “Solidarność”, the big five, as we see them in mid-2023:

- sustained (1980-2022) and sustainable grass-roots solidarity with the victims of the Russian genocide inside the postcommunist civil societies (east of Elbe)
- emergent awareness of the need to deal with the amnesia about Russian communist genocide (1917-1999) and its continuation in the Ukrainian campaigns of 2014 and 2022 (west of Elbe)

- random acts of resistance, for instance, Occupy XYZ (Wall Street, university, etc.) as dress rehearsals for solidarity with the 99% (inside even the most affluent societies, but especially in the global “south”)
- emergent re-assessment of the input of working class heroines into historical processes against the background of the uses and misuses of the gender issues in media(the case of Anna Walentynowicz)
- reinventing the re-negotiated constitutions as a manifestation of the growth of egalitarian access to knowledge and constraint on expert authority (the cases of the USA and Poland, where constitutional debates sustain civic society, and of the European Union, where constitution was deleted from public debate)

Slawomir MAGALA taught cross-cultural management at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam(1985-2015), at the Jagiellonian University(2016-2018), and at the Warsaw University, Poland (2019-). Since 2004 he is the editor in chief of “Journal of Organizational Change Management”. He wrote *Class Struggle in Classless Poland* (South End Press, 1982, as Stanislaw Starski), *The Polish Student Theatre as an Element of Counterculture* (MAW, 1988), *Cross Cultural Management* (Routledge, 2005), *The Management of Meaning in Organizations* (Emerald, 2009) and *The Third Enlightenment or Globalizing Meritocracies* (Cambridge Scholars, 2021). He co-founded “Solidarity” in the Polish Academy of Sciences in Poznan in September 1980.

Piotr Długolecki
Polish Institute of International Affairs

The Polish Crisis 1980–1982 from Western Perspective

The subject of the proposed speech is the attitude of Western states toward the situation in Poland in 1980–1982. Such events as the deepening economic crisis, the creation of Solidarity, the threat of Soviet intervention, or the introduction of martial law aroused great interest abroad and made the so-called “Polish crisis” one of the most important events in international relations at that time.

The policy of Western countries toward Poland was not uniform, and it changed over time along with changes in the internal situation of the People's Republic of Poland. In the speech, I will also demonstrate the common and divergent elements of Western countries' policies adopted in connection with the crisis in Poland and talk about the specific nature of each country's relations with Poland as well as about the measures the Polish communist authorities adopted to counter the steps taken by Western countries.

Western reactions to the lively international activity of Solidarity (visits of Polish delegations abroad and foreign trade union delegations in Poland) as well as the increase in the activity of the Polish community and of opposition circles in the People's Republic of Poland will also be shown.

The source for the proposed paper will be the documents published in the volume “The Polish Crisis From Western Perspective,” which contains archives from 13 countries of the political West (and from the NATO Archive). The speech will also be based on archival materials published in four volumes of Polish Diplomatic Documents for the years 1980–1982 (over 2,000 documents in total).

Piotr DŁUGOLECKI – a historian employed in the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) and a deputy of the editor-in-chief of the Polish Diplomatic Documents series. He has published volumes of Polish Diplomatic Documents (PDD 1959, PDD 1976 and PDD 1980–1981). The scientific editor of the publication *Confronting the Holocaust. The Polish Government in Exile towards Jews 1939–1945* and the publication *The Polish Crisis 1980-1982 from Western Perspective*.

Prof. UP dr hab. Małgorzata Świder

Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny imienia Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Krakowie

The Western Left Wing and Solidarity, 1980-1981

The democratic governments and societies of the West had various reactions to the unrest along the Baltic Coast in the summer of 1980, from enthusiasm and declarations of support for Solidarity to verbal withdrawal and carefulness in their dealings with Poland, one example of which was the social democratic government of the Federal Republic of Germany (in the coalition of the Social Democratic Party of Germany and the Free Democratic Party) and the trade unions which shared its ideology. That approach was heavily criticized, not only outside of the Federal Republic of Germany but also in the West German left-wing circles which had been providing active support for Poland since the autumn of 1980.

Since the end of the 1980s, the West German left wing began organizing support for Solidarity, and it created an initiative called *Solidarnität mit Solidarność*. It was a heterogeneous group comprising: left-wing social democrats and trade unionists related to the German Trade Union Confederation, including their youth organizations, the Socialist Office (Trotskyists) and the non-dogmatic New Left which created it, Maoists from the International Marxist Group and a part of the dogmatic New Left from the Communist League of West Germany, the Socialist Committee for Eastern Europe (German: Sozialistische Osteuropa-Komitee) established by immigrants from the East and leftists from the West, and many members and sympathizers of the Greens. (Since *Solidarnität mit Solidarność* did not cooperate with Communist Party of Germany, it will not be included in the paper.)

The activity of the *Solidarnität mit Solidarność* initiative provided a model for many other initiatives supporting Poland which were formed after the imposition of martial law in Poland. The greatest one was the *Solidarnität mit Polen* initiative created at the beginning of 1982 by West German trade unions. Various institutions – political parties, trade unions, charity organizations, and churches – cooperated within its framework.

Małgorzata ŚWIDER – doktor habilitowany of humanities, professor of the Pedagogical University of Krakow, specializing in the history of Germany after 1945, Polish-German relations in the 20th century, and modern history of Silesia. She studied at the University of Cologne and the Technical University of Dortmund where she was granted the degree of doctor of philosophy. In 2016, she was granted the degree of doktor habilitowany of humanities in the field of history (habilitation thesis: *The Position of the Social Democratic Party of Germany on Poland in 1980–1989*). Since October, 2019, she has been employed in the Institute of History and Archival Study of the Pedagogical University of Krakow. She is the author and editor of a few books and over 100 articles and scientific papers published mainly in Polish and German. Editor-in-chief of “Res Gestae. Czasopismo historyczne”.

Prof. Cristina Petrescu

Faculty of Political Science, University of Bucharest

Odd Perceptions: The Polish Solidarity in Romania

The history of Europe in the twentieth century cannot be written without the Polish Solidarity, yet its transnational influences generated rather diverse entanglements across East-Central Europe. This paper follows the perceptions of Polish Solidarity among Romanians and underlines their stark contrast with the pan-Central-European civil society fighting for rights and freedom, which this trade union inspired in the region. Among Romanians, the birth of the Polish Solidarity in 1980 went rather unnoticed. The outlawing of Solidarity in 1981, ironically enough, received a support by default from Nicolae Ceaușescu, who opposed the military intervention of the Warsaw Treaty Organization troops in Poland, which General Jaruzelski had requested. By 1989, the perspective changed radically though. While Ceaușescu criticized the Polish communist leadership for allowing the Solidarity in the government after the June elections, and asked the other countries to stop this experiment in Poland, most Romanians envied the Poles for their solidarity. However, nobody dared to even think that a Solidarity could emerge in Romania. The so-called snowball effect of regime changes generated in Poland touched Romania only last, in December 1989, and its cause was not a Solidarity-inspired Romanian opposition, but a precipitate combination of popular revolt and coup d'état organized by second-rank communists. The transition to democracy in Romania was led by former communist bureaucrats unwilling to initiate profound economic changes, while Poland engaged in radical economic reforms inspired by Solidarity's economics expert Leszek Balcerowicz. Consequently, Romania was a laggard in the process of EU accession, but still joined three years after the Central European countries. By now these neo-liberal reforms are rightly criticized for the social inequalities they produced, but Romanians still believe that their absence hampered the economic development of their country and their personal well-being during the transition. The Polish Solidarity and the actions it inspired and supported have always generated odd perceptions among Romanians.

Cristina PETRESCU is Professor at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Bucharest. She authored *From Robin Hood to Don Quixote: Resistance and Dissent in Communist Romania* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2013), and co-edited *Nation-Building and Contested Identities: Romanian and Hungarian Case Studies* (Budapest: Regio Books, 2001). She published in international volumes and peer-reviewed journals in the United States, Great Britain, Spain, Germany, Poland and Hungary over 30 studies on East-Central Europe. She participated in several international projects, notably as National Task Manager in the Horizon 2020 project COURAGE – Cultural Opposition: Understanding the Cultural Heritage of Dissent in Former Socialist Countries.

Daniel Filip-Afloarei

The Institute for the Investigation of the Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile,

Romania and the Solidarity Crisis of 1980-1981: a Different Approach?

Usually, the historiography, especially the Romanian one, portrays the reaction of the Romanian Communist Party as different from that of the fraternal socialist countries regarding the Solidarity crisis. Our work starts from the hypothesis according to which the Solidarity crisis was seen by the Romanian leadership as a threat, despite the different speeches promoted by Ceausescu within the Warsaw Treaty or during press releases. Because Romania had to respect its main principle of foreign policy, „non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries,” it did not mean that its leadership was not worried about the evolution of crisis in Poland. Like Polish authorities, Romania also has had problems with foreign debts, violation of human rights, or with the supply of the domestic market. So, the seeds of a crisis were also in the Socialist Republic of Romania.

The first objective of my paper is to go beyond the official discourse and to identify the measures taken by the Romanian leadership on the domestic level to avoid the possible effects of the Polish crisis. Secondly, I will analyze the discourse not only through press releases or multilateral meetings but also at a bilateral level during the visits of the Polish delegates to Romania. All of these will help us to get a better insight into the Romanian reaction to the Polish crisis.

For doing that, I will use the Romanian diplomatic correspondence from Warsaw, as well as the Polish one from Bucharest, and the archives with the discussions of the Politburo concerning the Solidarity crisis of 1980-1981.

Daniel FILIP-AFLOAREI is researcher at the Institute for the Investigation of the Crimes of Communism and the Memory of the Romanian Exile [IICCMER] and graduate of the Doctoral School of the Faculty of History in Iasi, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, with a thesis about *Romania and the crisis of the communist regime in Poland - 1980-1989*. He was an IICCMER fellow (October 2020 - March 2021) and received two Erasmus scholarships in Poland, at “Adam Mickiewicz” University in Poznań (2016-2017) and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (2018-2019). Areas of interest: the history of international relations and diplomacy, the history of the Cold War and the history of Romanian-Polish relations during the communist period.

Prof. dr hab. Roman Bäcker

Faculty of Political Sciences and International Studies,
Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

Processes of Empowerment of a Political Nation. The Case of Solidarity 1980-1981

The analysis of the four basic dimensions of the political empowerment of the first Solidarity allows us to formulate the following conclusions:

1. At the articulation level, there was a transition from the supplication stage (July 1980) through aggregated demands (after the creation of the MKS on August 16, 1980) to the development of a comprehensive program.

2. On the organizational dimension, there has been a shift from organized protests to a sustainable potential for self-organization. The stage of multi-level organizational pluralism has not been reached.

3. The potential for mobilization grew from July 1980 until the warning general strike, when it reached its maximum. Then it began to fall; after the declaration of martial law on December 13, 1981, this potential was already small.

4. The signing of the August Agreements meant a written acceptance of the existence of a separate social entity by the hitherto monopolist – ruling elite. This formal recognition was neither complete nor unconditional and was ultimately negated by the imposition of martial law.

Thus: firstly, a significant part of the working, student and farming communities has reached the elementary level of political empowerment. Without detailed research, it is impossible to determine how large this part was, although it can be assumed that it coincided with the number of people active in the Solidarity conspiracy in 1982. Thus, the ability to self-articulate, self-organize, act collectively and pursue collective interests has been achieved. On the other hand, this is the second conclusion, the level of capacity for fully (or largely) rationalized subjectivity has not been reached. Thirdly, efforts to achieve sovereignty in the international arena were refrained from. However, the level of program readiness for the nation to achieve internal political sovereignty has been achieved.

Roman BÄCKER – Professor of Political Sciences at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. The president of Polish Political Science Association in 2010-2016, the first dean of the Faculty of Political Sciences and International Studies, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (2009-2016), the author and co-author of books and articles about Russian and European political thought, totalitarianism, the theory of politics, and methodology of political sciences.

Prof. UMCS dr hab. Jarosław Chodak
Institute of Sociology UMCS in Lublin

Solidarność 1980-81 from the Perspective of the Theories of Revolution

There is a long tradition of theoretical reflection on revolution in the social sciences. Four generations of revolutionary theorists can be distinguished. The 'revolution' of Solidarity erupted when the third of these was dominant. However, both the theorists of the third generation and the next, fourth generation, did not make Solidarity an important subject of their studies, although they did theorize, for example, on revolutions and revolutionary movements in Iran (1979), Cuba (1959), Nicaragua (1979) and other countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa or even the 1989 transition in Eastern Europe. The author argues that the main reason why Solidarity 1980-1981 is overlooked by revolutionary theorists is due to the ways in which they adopt to define 'revolution'. From this point of view, Solidarity, despite its 'revolutionary' consequences for the situation in Eastern Europe throughout the decade of the 1980s, was not a typical revolutionary movement, but rather a reformist social movement.

Jarosław CHODAK - sociologist and historian. He works in the Department of Sociology and Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Computer Modeling at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin (Poland). His interests focused on theory and comparative studies of revolutionary movements and nonviolent civil resistance. He is the author of books: *Theories of the Revolution in Social Sciences* (2012, in Polish) and *Unarmed rEvolutions. New Scripts of Contentious Politics* (2019, in Polish). Currently, he is focused on disinformation and relationship between social media, politics, and political participation.

Prof. dr hab. Krzysztof Brzechczyn

Faculty of Philosophy at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

/the Historical Research Office of the Institute of National Remembrance, Poznań Branch,

Transformations of Solidarność and Fate of its Ideological Heritage in years 1989-1991

The development of Polish society seen from the perspective of the over forty years (1980-2023) can be characterized by a certain paradox, which exerted influence even on the shape of democracy in present Poland. Although the Solidarność mass movement in the years 1980-81 was a decisive impulse behind the collapse of communism in the years 1989-91 in Poland and other countries of Eastern Europe, the ideological legacy of Solidarność and – more importantly – its practical experiences affected the political transformations between 1989 and 1991 to a fairly limited extent.

This paradox is recognized by different foreign and Polish authors. In my presentation this paradox can be explained by changing nature of Solidarność itself. In years 1980-1981 Solidarność was a mass revolutionary, grass-root but peaceful movement that produced own programme – the project of Self-Governing Res Public that include communitarian and socialist motives. .

However, the introduction of the martial law in Poland after December 13, 1981 caused a withdrawal of the civil masses from social activities and Solidarność transformed into a cadre underground movement. In years 1981-1986, the communist authorities in Poland were not able to destruct the underground Solidarność and on the other hand Solidarność underground strictures were not able to restore legal activity of the trade unions. However since September 1986 communist authorities changed their policy towards the Solidarność that transformed into almost open social movement. The prize of new social compromise made in 1989 was consent on neoliberal transformation (so called ‘shock’ therapy) of Polish economy which caused resignation from communitarian or socialist elements presented in the program of the first Solidarność.

Krzysztof BRZEHCZYN, professor of the humanities, employed in the Faculty of Philosophy at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and the Institute of National Remembrance. He has recently authored: *Historical Distinctiveness of Central Europe. A Study from Philosophy of History* (Peter Lang 2020) and *Umysł solidarnościowy. Geneza i ewolucja myśli społeczno-politycznej Solidarności w latach 1980-1979 (The Solidarity Mind. The Genesis and Evolution of Social and Political Thought of Solidarność in Years 1980-1989, 2022)*. Fields of interests: philosophy of history, political and social philosophy, methodology of history and theory of historiography. A full list of publications is available at academia.edu and researchgate.

Dr Liubov Krupnyk
Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance

The Cooperation of Dissidents from the USSR with Solidarity

When Solidarity was being formed in Poland, hundreds of political prisoners were held in Soviet camps and in exile. Ukrainian dissidents were sentenced to the longest prison terms, and they were the most numerous.

As regards cooperation between national movements, the USSR dissidents distributed leaflets and created underground organizations and groups for the protection of human rights, for example, Helsinki Groups. Their members were held in camps, and they made contact and struck friendships there. After their release, they kept in touch by phone, corresponded, and met each other. As regards contact with the opposition from Soviet countries, since 1989, it was very weak because USSR citizens actually lived behind two 'iron curtains.'

However, Soviet dissidents monitored Polish Solidarity movement, which shook the whole socialist bloc, mainly by reading Soviet press which was available even in prisons. They listened to Western radio stations. The events in Poland gave them hope and made them feel they were not fighting alone.

When the Soviet 'prisoners of conscience' were released from prisons, as a result of so-called Gorbachev's amnesty, they catalyzed social and political life in their republics, in the relatively conducive conditions of perestroika.

After 1989, when Solidarity gained power in Poland, the previous political prisoners from the USSR were contacted. In particular, representatives of Polish Fighting Solidarity first made contact with the Baltic states where they received contact data of dissidents from other Soviet republics. The cooperation and help started and were continued after the fall of the USSR. Polish Solidarity provided important support for independence movements in the Soviet empire, and it facilitated the exchange of information and of experiences of resistance.

Liubov KRUPNYK, a leading specialist at the Department of Policy Making of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance (Kyiv). PHD in History at Ivan Franko Lviv National University (2003). Thesis title: "The State Politics Regarding the Ukrainian Professional Arts, 1965-1985". The author of nearly one hundred scientific publications on the history of Ukraine and Eastern Europe in the second part of XX century.

Prof. David Darchiashvili

Ilia State University,

The Furthest Resonance of “Solidarity”: Georgia’s Patchy Road to Democracy

The emergence of a mass, structured anti-communist movement in Poland in 1980 marked a new and unprecedented stage in the history of the communist Central/Eastern Europe and of the whole Soviet space. In 1989, within the context of a) the political authority of the Catholic Church; b) democratization in the USSR and c) the ongoing transformation of Euro-Atlantic security discourse and policies, “Solidarity” directed the Polish United Workers Party, which ruled the Polish People’s Republic, toward a substantial compromise leading to the end of the communist rule. According to researchers, the April 1989 compromise and the consequential first semi-independent elections led not only to the emergence of the Third Republic, but also to the domino effect which ended with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. But has that process really finished?

The presentation will focus: 1. on the contradictory assessments and memories in contemporary Poland regarding 1989 events; 2. on the possible effects of the Polish experience on the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic (the argument being that the influence was mainly indirect, mediated by the examples of GDR and Baltic states which themselves were directly affected by the Polish one); 3. on a comparison of the current memory structure in Poland regarding revolutionary processes with the memory structure of Georgians regarding their democratization experience, namely, the Round Table of Georgia 1990 and Rose Revolution in Georgia 2003 – events the importance of which was similar to that of the Solidarity movement in Poland.

David DARCHIASVILI has the status of the Candidate of the Ph.D. in History and Ph. D. in Political Sciences. Currently he is a Professor in International Relations, Ilia State University, Georgia and directs the think-tank The Center of Russian Studies. Besides international relations, Darchiashvili works in political sciences and comparative history.

Prof. Dragos Petrescu

Faculty of Political Science, University of Bucharest

Polish Solidarity and the “Snowballing Effect: ”Looking Retrospectively to the Outbreak of the 1989 Revolutions

The 1989 collapse of the communist regimes in six countries in East-Central Europe (ECE) has been compared with a revolutionary snowball which started to run downhill in Poland and subsequently went through Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania. Solidarity, as the first free trade union in a communist country, played a central role in the initiation of the wave of revolutionary changes in 1989. The present paper focuses on the political process which led to the re-legalization of Solidarity, opening of the Polish Roundtable Talks and the final demise of the communist regime in that country. Poland’s “negotiated revolution” of 1989 presents a unique feature, which differentiates it from the rest of the revolutions of 1989. This feature concerns the main political actors which negotiated in 1989 the transition to a new political order. These actors were: (1) Solidarity; and (2) the regime of General Wojciech Jaruzelski (the communists in military uniform), and the key aspect is that both actors were born of the Polish crisis of 1980-1981. This author contends that the period August 1980-December 1981 constituted a fork in the road for both communist power and societal opposition in Poland, which opened a new path in Polish recent history. In many respects, the appearance of the 1989 revolutionary snowball in Poland was due to recent path dependence, and my paper elaborates on this argument.

Dragoș PETRESCU is Professor (hab.) of Comparative Politics at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Bucharest. His research interests are related to comparative communism, identity politics and post-1989 democratic transitions in East-Central Europe. Among many others, he authored *Entangled Revolutions: The Breakdown of the Communist Regimes in East-Central Europe* (2014) and *Explaining the Romanian Revolution of 1989: Culture, Structure, and Contingency* (2010), co-edited *Nation- Building and Contested Identities: Romanian & Hungarian Case Studies* (2001) and co-authored (with Włodzimierz Borodziej) Chapter 5 – “State socialism: violence, oppression and surveillance” of *The Routledge History Handbook of Central and Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century*, Vol. 4: *Violence* (2022).

Prof. Patryk Pleskot

The Historical Research Office of the Institute of National Remembrance, Warsaw Branch

*How to escape from revolution?
Western diplomacy towards Polish political transformation in 1989*

From Western perspective the Polish political transformation, initiated in February 1989, was overshadowed by the concerns over the Soviet reaction. The Polish structural changes have begun earlier than in the other countries of Eastern Europe. This pioneering endeavour, however, carried a heavy price, bringing about a state of extreme anxiety and insecurity. The Polish authorities were able to use these sentiments in their struggle to retain the power they held for so long, emphasizing the threat of Soviet repercussions. Interestingly, the Solidarity leaders were very apprehensive about these exaggerated threats. Even more interestingly, this cautious attitude of opposition leaders was then adopted by Western politicians. During following months, one could observe a certain shift in the approach taken by Western diplomats – where there was once open support for the Solidarity movement, now first the tone has softened and a wait-and-see attitude has started to prevail; then calls for moderation have emerged, and there were even cases where support was given to the Communist government in order to „maintain the balance”. As Gregory F. Domber put it, American (and more generally Western) government behaved as a “reluctant inhibitor”.

Patryk PLESKOT, professor at the Rzeszów University – historian, political scientist, graduate from Warsaw University and Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris. He was also studying at University of Nancy. Scholar of the Foundation of Polish Science, Ministry of National Education and the government of French Republic. He obtained his „habilitation” title at the Institute of Political Studies (Polish Academy of Sciences) in 2015. Since 2007 he works at the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw (recently as a main specialist) and from 2021 – as a professor at the Rzeszów University. In 2013 he was visiting fellow at the University of Western Sydney. He is a member of the Polish American Historical Association (PAHA) as well as member of editorial board of the periodical „Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość”. Area of his scientific interest consists of French history and historiography, political, cultural and social history of communist Poland, transitional justice, as well as migration studies, activities of Polish diaspora after 1945 and the history of Polish intelligence and counter-espionage apparatus. He is an author, co-author or editor of about 45 books and about 200 scientific articles.



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